

LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

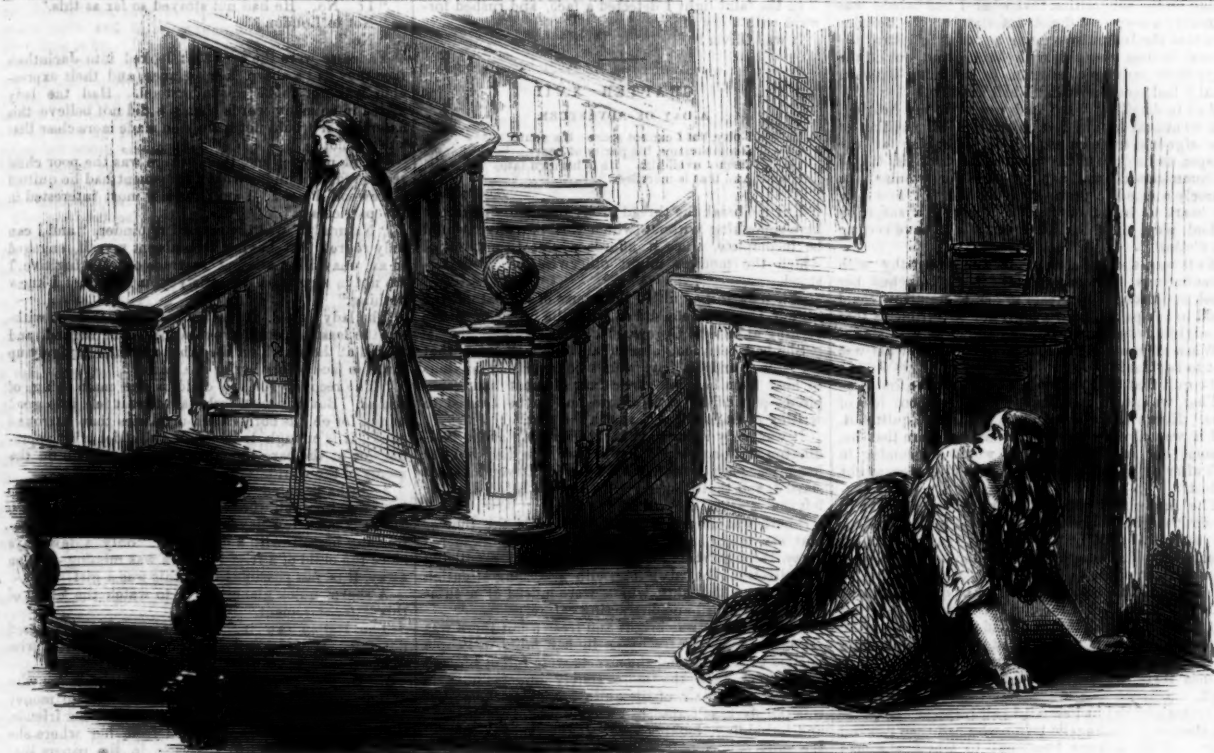
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE DEAD ALIVE.]

THE WRONG DRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Golden Mask," "The Stranger's Secret," "Man and His Idol," "The Warning Voice," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

INTERCEPTED FLIGHT.

Let me embrace you. Oh, some lucky star
Has brought you hither.

The Spanish Student.

At the sight of the startling apparition of the corpse of the beautiful form I had beheld standing before me on the bottom step of the great staircase, I started up, shrieking aloud.

I started and beat my hands against the iron-plated door, and then a swooning sensation came over me.

Terror drove me to the verge of distraction, and physical exhaustion came to the relief of mental torture. My cries died away into faint gasps.

I felt myself falling against the door, and then a voice, faint and musical as that of a spirit, sounded in my ears as if from another world.

"For God's sake—" I heard it cry in a pleading tone.

No more. Not another word reached my ears. I was conscious of falling, not to the ground as it appeared to me, but upon clouds, through which I sank down, and ever down into a fathomless abyss.

Sinking and sinking, with a dim consciousness of trouble haunting me, it seemed as if my course was at length arrested by an outstretched hand. I felt the fingers closing round my wrist. Cold fingers they were, icy-cold, and the effect of their coldness was to recall me to myself. No longer sinking through space, I became conscious of a moaning sound—it was my own voice—and of pain, that occasioned by my fall, and then I opened my eyes, and saw, through a dim haze, the face of the dead gazing down into my own.

At that sight I tried to cry out again, so great was my terror; but there was a look of deep commiseration

in the face, and the hand grasping my wrist tightened so earnestly that I was reassured. Some faint glimmering of the truth came over me.

I felt that I was in the arms of a living woman.

"Pray calm yourself," I heard her say, "you need not fear me."

As I looked again into her face, I saw that it was as gentle and loving as it was fair.

"I startled you?" she asked.

"Yes," I murmured.

"You did not know I was in the house?"

"I did."

"Indeed! You knew that I lay in the secret room—"

"Dead—as I believed."

She caught in her breath with a shudder.

"Yes, yes," she ejaculated, "like one dead. I understand your terror now. You believed that it was my corpse which stood before you? These were my grave-clothes as you thought, and heaven knows how soon it might have been so! But you will fear me no more. If you could know all, you would only pity me."

I saw the tears oozing into her beautiful blue eyes, and her voice grew choked and tremulous as she spoke. Drawn towards her by her beauty, and touched by the sorrow which overshadowed her young life, I yielded to the sympathetic prompting of the moment, and threw my arms about her neck in a transport of tenderness.

"You have enemies?" I asked.

"Yes, and remorseless ones."

"And he who owns this place, the Italian, Gasparo, is among them?"

"Hush!"

A tremour of fear came upon her at the mention of that name, and she looked round as if expecting to see those lurid eyes peering through the darkness.

"You need not fear," I cried, "he is gone."

"Gone."

"He was this morning carried off by officers of justice."

"No. Is it possible? Heaven be praised! That then accounts for all?"

She saw an enquiring look in my face, and hurried to explain herself.

"I cannot tell you all my shameful story," she said, "but this I can confide to you. I said just now that I had enemies—heartless, unscrupulous, implacable men. Among these Gasparo is the foremost. He was my father's friend. Some bond of sympathy or interest united them, and when it pleased providence to leave me an orphan, Gasparo was made the principal executor under my father's will. That will left me on my coming of age a great fortune: it was placed at my absolute disposal, and so secured to me, as my dotting father believed, that nothing could rob me of the enjoyment of it. But he little knew the man in whose honour he confided.

"Gasparo proved treacherous?" I interrupted.

"So treacherous," she replied, "that not only is my fortune going from me bit by bit, swallowed up in legal expenses, and extorted from me under the threat of my affairs being thrown into chancery, from which there is little chance of their being extricated in my lifetime; but I, myself, am not safe. I have been brought to this place, wherever it is, under the influence of some narcotic—some chemical of strange and subtle influence, which deprives its victim of consciousness, and imparts to it the aspect of death. That, you have yourself witnessed?"

"Yes," I replied, "by accident. But what purpose does this wickedness serve?"

"Simply this, child, that I have from a girl been destined to be the wife of one whom I dearly love. It was the darling wish of my father's heart that Albany—"

"Albany Seymour?" I exclaimed.

She looked at me with startled face.

"You know him?" she demanded.

"I have seen him."

"Ah, where and when; tell me, I entreat you."

"He was in this house—"

"This house?"

"And only last night."

She clasped her hands, and gazed at me with an incredulous face.

"Impossible!" she cried, "and you who tell me

this—you are in this house? You are one of those I have such cause, such bitter cause, to fear."

With the fewest words I disabused her mind, telling her so much of my history as was necessary for that purpose, and also how it was that I had seen her, as I supposed, lying dead, and what I had heard of the signor's interview with her lover. I added, what was the strict truth, that, until that moment it had not occurred to me to associate the idea of her with the charge Albany Seymour had brought against Gasparo. Going on the supposition that what I had beheld was in reality a corpse, and not entertaining the horrible idea that the Italian was going so far as to destroy the woman he was charged with having put out of the way, there was no connection in my mind between what I had seen and what I had heard.

And in detailing what had passed in my hearing, and what had followed it, I omitted all mention of the signor's treacherous act in snatching at the weapon as he quitted the room. The truth is, that I so commiserated the hapless girl—for woman she scarcely seemed in years—that I could not find it in my heart to inflict on her the pang of a suspicion of foul play, of which her lover might have become the victim.

As it was, she suffered agonies in sympathy with his sufferings. His misery and despair blanched her cheek and brought the tears to her eyes. How could I add to her pain by any suggestion so terrible as that he might have perished by the hand of an assassin?

When all was told we came to consider what was best to be done?

To quit that terrible house was clearly the first step. That, we agreed, must be attempted without loss of time. Hours had elapsed since the Italian quitted it, and it was already dusk: the chances were that he, or some one in his confidence, would be coming to look after us, and then every chance of escape might be lost.

The first object was to secure some garment in which it might be possible for Violet to venture into the streets. The brilliant Indian shawl, with its threads of gold, beneath which I had seen her lying, was quite out of the question. Yet of any article of female attire the house seemed to be quite destitute. Suddenly I recollected the cloak I had seen hanging on the moveable wall that guarded the approach to the secret chamber, and we ventured to ascend the stairs for the purpose of possessing ourselves of it.

Once there we ventured into the secret chamber itself.

It remained as I had seen it in all respects, except for the absence of the angelic being who had then reposed there. Of the strange treatment to which she had been subjected two trifling objects alone remained in evidence. One of these was the golden tissue which had covered her face. The other was a crystal phial, covered with Arabic characters in gold, which still contained a few drops of the colourless liquid which had exercised so powerful an effect over the Italian's victim.

"I will secure these," said Violet, possessing herself of them; "who can say to what they may one day lead?"

Who, indeed?

At that moment I little thought that those trifles were to form the turning point in my own fate, in the days that were to come!

Quitting this secret chamber we re-entered the room in which I had passed a feverish night, under the pretence of sleep, and there the delicate Violet wrapped about her the cloak of which I have spoken, and which was ample enough to conceal her fragile form effectually.

She was in the act of drawing it about her, when a sharp sound reverberated through the house.

We detected its nature simultaneously, and without a word, clung shivering one to the other, in a sudden ecstasy of fear.

Some one had entered the house!

The shock was caused by the closing of the door which I had in vain striven to force open.

It was followed by footsteps on the hollow, echoing staircase.

"Tis he! Gasparo has returned," whispered my companion, her teeth chattering as she spoke. "Oh, what, what will become of us?"

So loud and startling were the echoes through the empty house, that it was impossible to recognize the character of the footsteps, as they came on and on, growing nearer and more distinct with every instant: yet I did not share Violet Maldon's fears; whoever it might be, I could not believe that it was the lethargic Signor Gasparo, and I whispered my conviction.

"But if it is one of his creatures?" replied Violet, also under her breath.

The idea was terrible enough, and we shrank and clung one to the other in the conviction that at least all prospect of escape was cut off—that we remained in the power of a man whom we had both too good reason to fear.

Rapidly the unknown approached.

He had ascended the stairs. He was entering the room beyond. We could hear him approach the table, and the rustle of papers was distinctly audible.

There was a pause.

A long and terrible pause it seemed to us as we clung together, our hearts throbbing with agitation. Presently there was a fresh movement in the room beyond.

Some one approached the door and looked it.

In the faint light I detected a face, and rushed forward with a cry of joy.

It was Oliver!

CHAPTER XVII.

A DAY OF ADVENTURE.

I pity, but I cannot spare: his youth,
His innocence, his purity of heart,
Cannot avail him. He is his own fate,
And that is merciless.

Don Carlos.

LET me break the thread of my own story to record here something without which this narrative would be incomplete, since it affords a clue to actions of which the motives might otherwise be ill-understood.

When Jacintha quitted the house of her father, the Signor Gasparo, she did so with the intention of returning at once to Gorewood Place.

She had been long absent, and she well knew that Sir Gower and his lady would be feverishly anxious to hear from her lips particulars of what had transpired—particulars of a nature not to be trusted to writing or transmitted through the post.

It was early in the day, and on arriving at the Paddington station, hurried and excited, she discovered to her intense annoyance that a train for Devon had just started, and that it would be two hours before another left that station.

There was no resource but to beguile the time as best she might, and with this object she wandered away, through streets and squares, scarcely noticing the direction: but dwelling with absorbing attention on her own thoughts, which were indeed of a sufficiently perturbed and distracting nature.

The morning was bright and fresh; but there was no brightness, no freshness in her mind. People bustled to and fro, and the streets were full of life and animation; even the more stately and fashionable quarters had an air of life quite foreign to them; but this tall, dark, self-absorbed woman passed along, stern and forbidding, looking the mystery she was, and all the more repulsive for the dark secrets buried in her heart.

London was familiar to the Italian, who had lived in it many years, and awaking out of a reverie she recognized the neighbourhood of Westbourne Place. It was one of the second-rate streets of the part, and the houses had little gardens in front of them, which presented a gay aspect in the pleasant morning.

She was fond of flowers, and coming to a house in which a jasmine climbed in front, she half stopped to look at it.

A lady was stooping, with her back to the street, plucking a blossom or two, and hearing some footstep, for the street was still, she straightened herself and looked round.

It was the wife of Vivian Gower!

Her eyes met those of Jacintha in an instant flash of recognition, and she came forward.

"You want me?" she said. "Come in."

Jacintha's first impulse was to deny all knowledge of the wan, faded, drooping woman; her second to escape. Prudence, however, negatived both those steps. Without absolutely fearing anything, she felt the necessity of preserving appearances.

"Come in," the lady repeated, opening the garden-gate: "you are here from Sir Gower? You have some news—some message for me?"

"No," replied the bewildered woman, "I was only passing, and —"

"Passing! Accidentally? Indeed! And you have not returned to Devon yet?"

The manner of Vivian's wife was light and cordial; but it was easy to see that her face was twitching, and that she fairly trembled with excess of nervousness.

Before Jacintha could reply they had entered a little drawing-room overlooking the garden, and she noticed that as they came in the other turned the key in the lock; but so softly that only the sharpest ear could have detected it.

"As I was saying, you have not returned yet?" she said.

"No; I am now awaiting the train."

"Indeed! When does it start?"

"In a quarter of an hour at farthest."

The trembling little woman drew out a gold repeater from her waistband and placed it on an inlaid table at her side.

"You must not miss it," she said, "but, a quarter of an hour!—you can satisfy me in that time. You have already guessed what it is that I would ask you? I am, of course, most anxious about Sir Gower's son. Has he been heard of? Is there any news?"

"There is," was the slow answer.

"Ah, tell me—he is found?"

"Yes."

"Thank goodness! And you are taking him home, perhaps?"

"If No. He had not strayed so far as this."

"Not to London?"

"No."

Faded as were the eyes that looked into Jacintha's face they had a sharp, keen glance, and their expression was not to be misunderstood. Had the lady stated in so many words that she did not believe this assertion, it would not have been made more clear that she did not.

"And pray tell me, then, where was the poor child recovered, and under what inducement had he quitted Gorewood Place? I am naturally most interested in the particulars."

"Naturally," was the shrewd rejoinder, "and I can only regret that having been absent myself, engaged in an unavailing attempt to trace out the fugitive, I am not in a position to satisfy you. In fact I know nothing."

The lady sighed. It was natural to her to do so without the least apparent provocation. She sighed, and looked at the watch on the table, and then hurriedly up into the face before her as she said:

"The recovery of the child is the main thing, of course. But it is most fortunate that it fell into good hands, for oh, the horrors and mysteries that surround one! It is enough to make one shudder with apprehension at the bare thought of a child thrown on the mercy of the world."

Jacintha assented; she assented to everything she said to something, and wondered what was to follow.

"It is but a few days," she had continued, after refreshing herself with a deep sigh, "only a few days since the child of a friend of ours was missing—stolen away, it is just possible. But this was a girl!"

A sharp, quick glance, as it to watch the effect of this latter statement.

The Italian saw it; but her own face expressed nothing. It was too well schooled to betray surprise or emotion unwittingly.

"This poor child fell into the hands of persons who at once conceived the idea of turning her to money account. They might have restored her to her friends, for, of course, they acquainted from her where she lived, but they chose to advertise in the papers that she had been found straying, and could be recovered on the payment of expenses, which, of course, included a handsome gratuity. When this advertisement appeared, a friend of ours, a legal gentleman—his name was Plunkett—"

Again she paused, and keenly watched the effect of that name: an almost imperceptible quivering of the lip showed that it was recognized.

"—this poor gentleman, Plunkett, by name, was instructed by the girl's friends to make enquiries, and to ascertain whether their suspicions were correct—whether this was indeed the lost child. He did so. He identified it without hesitation. He removed it from the wretched den in which he found it, and conveyed it to his own house. You follow me?"

"Perfectly."

"There it remained safely one night, and during that night a terrible calamity happened. If you read the newspapers you may have seen that a lawyer of the name I have mentioned was found dead in his bed, and it happened on that very night."

"Singular!" murmured Jacintha, glancing impatiently at the watch.

"Yes, singular indeed; but there is even yet a more singular part of the story. The friends of the lost child, impatient to learn the result, hastened to the lawyer's house. There they learned what had taken place, and in answer to their eager enquiries were informed that the child was safe in the care of a housekeeper who had come into the house only on the preceding day. This person was at once sought for, but in vain. She was not to be found."

"No?"

"She had disappeared, and what was still more mysterious, the child—the girl, as I have said—was also missing."

"And you infer from this—"

"That the pretended housekeeper was in league with the persons who had decoyed the child away, and that some powerful motive had induced her to become an inmate of the lawyer's house, only to regain possession of it. Whether—"

She paused, trembling from head to foot.

"—whether her presence in that house was in any way connected with Plunkett's death I dare not say."

The dark skin of the Italian darkened several

shades, until her face was of a greenish olive tint. In that way only did she betray her resentment at this adroitly expressed suspicion.

"It would be difficult to say," was her only remark. "The story is singular."

"Yes—as showing the dangers to which the young are exposed at the hands of the designing. It would be incomplete if I did not add, that our friends, though baffled thus far, do not abandon all hope. They have still a clue, through the young ruffian who decoyed the child from her home, and they will leave nothing untried, they will spare no exertions, to arrive at the truth, and to bring the guilty to justice. But your time is up. Pray give Lady Gower my warmest congratulations on the recovery of Master Julius"—her lip curled at the name—"and add that we shall be but too happy to see the baronet and her ladyship should they be visiting town. Good morning!"

She took up her watch, thrust it into the band about her waist, and bowed Jacintha from the house and from the garden, sighing deeply as she did so.

Strong and determined as Jacintha was, this interview troubled her.

She had obviously got the worst of it.

What the faded, forlorn woman had intended to say she had said. What she had designed to hint she had hinted at. In her quiet way, and under the natural pretence of expressing sympathy with the troubles of that branch of the family to which Vivian Gower had recently become reconciled, she had conveyed the fact, that she had a full knowledge of all that had been done, and why it had been done. After listening to her, Jacintha could not doubt but that she had been identified as the person who had carried off the child from Plunkett's house, and there was as little cause for doubting the strong suspicion that to prevent a disclosure, simple in itself, but of the utmost moment, she had shortened the lawyer's life.

At the thought of this latter point her lip quivered. She could not forget from whose lips a similar charge had fallen, or be indifferent to the danger that thus threatened her.

But there was one statement still more alarming.

The lady had not hesitated to insinuate that the clue to the secret of so much moment to her was not lost, but that she had some chance of gaining her point through the lad, Oliver, who thus unconsciously occupied once more a position of the deepest moment.

"Strange!" she muttered to herself, as she wandered moodily on. "For twelve years this boy is to me as the dead. Whether he lives or not, I cannot tell. From the moment that I entrusted him to Jerome's hands, my interest in him is confined to the suggestion, which I never forget, 'Do not destroy him! Save him. He may be useful. Ingratitude is the natural reward of service. But the fangs of ingratitude are drawn by prudence.' From the night when those words were uttered over a helpless babe, it disappears, only to return when its return is fraught with the utmost danger."

Her thoughts dwelt long and painfully on this point. When she had reached the station, and taken her seat in the carriage that was to convey her back to Devonshire, it still occupied her deep and earnest attention.

"Better had he died," she muttered to herself, "than that he should be instrumental in defeating the work of years. The likeness that struck me—that impressed Sir Gower so strongly—cannot be lost on these astute, clever people, who have so much at stake in learning all that can be learned of their family. When I pointed out that likeness to Sir Gower, as a reason why he should detain the lad, and so saved the possibility of his giving evidence against Jerome, I little thought to what this would lead. Will it be necessary that he should perish? At least, it may be necessary that he should be removed beyond the possibility of his doing harm. And now let me think—what is the possible nature of the clue to him that these people have? What can he tell them of Julius? What is it possible that they should learn of himself?"

She was still revolving these and like questions in her anxious mind, when the train stopped at a station only two distant from that for which she was betaking herself—a small station, designed to accommodate some wealthy landed proprietor, and considerably open to the use of the few persons living thereabouts.

The main interest it had in Jacintha's eyes was that it closely adjoined the roadside inn kept by Becky Twinch, at which the fugitives from Gorewood Place were ascertained to have passed a night.

At this station only one passenger got into the train. He entered the compartment in which Jacintha sat.

It was a young man, with a confident, self-satisfied air, chiefly remarkable for a button-hole mouth, a pair of red whiskers which he had fondled and nurtured into premature luxuriance, broad shoulders, and long legs, that were always in their own's and every-

body else's way. He was rather showily dressed, and wore his white hat very much on one side. It was plain from his appearance that he belonged to London rather than to the remote part in which he found himself, and which he seemed to regard with supreme indifference.

By reason of the long unmanageable legs it happened that in moving to his seat this personage clumsily overset a small leather bag which Jacintha had placed on the cushion before her, and its contents were partially scattered on the floor.

With a thousand apologies the stranger busied himself to repair the mischief. He was very polite in manner; but this did not prevent his rudely glancing at the railway ticket of his companion, which had dropped to her feet, as he restored it to her with a bow.

The name of the station printed on this ticket evidently arrested his attention.

"Beg pardon," he said, stroking one of the red whiskers, "do you live at this place?"

His companion bowed.

"Know the people—'spose? The families? All that sort o' thing?"

"Slightly—yes."

"Had a little sort of domestic tragedy down there, haven't you, eh?"

He said it in a light, airy fashion, shifting to his other whisker as he did so.

Jacintha eyed him narrowly.

"You allude to—" she was beginning:

"The Gorewood business. Know Gorewood?"

"Yes."

"Deuced odd business that, eh? Son and heir bolting. Deuced odd. Know Sir Gower—what's his name—Gower?"

"Sir Anselm you mean."

"Exactly. Heard all about it, of course?"

"Some of the rumours have reached me," was the cautious reply.

"Ah, yes—the baronet's version. Cock-and-a-bull story about the burglary and the escaped prisoner carrying off the heir, and the rest of it? All moonshine. Plaus'd thing."

Jacintha looked up sharply.

"Why planned?" she asked.

Some suspicion that he was making a mistake shot with a feeble glimmer through the mind of the self-satisfied youth; but a change in Jacintha's manner, hastily and purposefully made, re-assured him.

"Family reasons, you know," he faltered. "Not prepared to say exactly what, but—well, all these great families have secrets, don't you know?"

"You are interested in this matter?" the woman asked, instead of returning any direct reply.

"Well, yes—our firm—that is—"

"You are a lawyer?"

"Say that I hope to be. Better way of putting it," and he thrust his fingers through his right whiskers, and looked sheepish.

"And your firm are interested in this affair?"

"Well, yes."

"You have come down to enquire into it, I presume? Are going to Gorewood perhaps?"

"To look about me, nothing more. One never knows what may turn up, you know. Fact is—there's no secret in this—our firm, Plunkett and Colt, are engaged in this—this family affair."

Self-possessed as she was, Jacintha could with difficulty control her dismay at this revelation. That office! What if he should recognize her as the suspicious housekeeper?

Mastering her voice as best she might, she, with assumed indifference, ventured to ask a perfectly natural question.

"For one branch of the Gower family, I suppose?"

"Right, Vivian Gower's our man. Fact is, old Plunkett, as we suppose, discovered the runaway heir—actually brought him to his house—died suddenly that very night—boy escaped again—"

"And you are on the search for him?"

"No. Not him; it's the young party who decoyed him away that we want?"

"Indeed! For what purpose?"

Unconsciously to herself her voice and manner alike betrayed extreme earnestness. The man noticed it, and again a suspicious look came into his face.

"Hang it, I say. You're curious," he exclaimed.

"However, I can't tell you what I don't know, and I don't know that. All I know is that we're on his track. We've found out his name. We've found out the inn the youngsters stayed at, close by the station where I got in. And there I found this—I found that he's the son of Jerome, called the Burglar, and so you see we're near him. We shall have him, and then let the cunning ones look out for squalls.—Hang it, I say, haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

A red glow of sunlight had suddenly shone into the carriage, and was lighting up the dark, handsome face with mellow brilliancy.

"No! It is not probable," cried Jacintha, hastily.

"I have no recollection of you. Ah, here is Gorewood."

They were in fact stopping.

Jacintha rose as the train grated slowly under the brakes.

The other rose also.

Without looking towards him she was aware of this, and could not refrain from trembling.

"Excuse me," said he of the whiskers, laying two fingers on her arm, "but as you know these parts and one doesn't know what may turn up, you know, would you mind—that is in case I wanted any information at any time—would you mind giving me—"

"My name and address?" demanded his companion with sudden hauteur. "I can have no objection. Any communication will reach me addressed—Lady Gower, Gorewood Place."

She stepped from the carriage, smiling grimly as she saw her companion start back, livid with horror at the information and at the mistake he saw he had made.

Whether he quitted the carriage at that station Jacintha did not stop to ascertain. All her anxiety was to reach Gorewood Place without delay.

"So, this was the clue?" she reflected, as she went.

"They will find Jerome, and through him Oliver, and then—one admission from his lips will overwhelm us with infamy and ruin. It must not—must not be. Oh, would to heaven I had silenced that feeble wail twelve years ago!"

The towers of Gorewood Place rose before her grandly against the red glow of the red evening sky as she profaned the sacred hour with this terrible ejaculation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INDIAN SHAWL.

'Tis drear such moonless nights as these,
Strange sounds are out upon the breeze,
And the leaves shiver in the trees.

Russell Lowell.

And will he not come again?—Hamlet.

OLIVER knew nothing of all this at the moment when, with a cry of delight, with burning cheeks, and eyes flashing with a momentarily kindled fire, I rushed into his arms.

How beautiful he was, and how my heart throbbed at the sight of him! And yet his eyes were sad, and a wan, wan smile faintly lit up his face.

His surprise was intense.

Never shall I forget the incredulous look with which he regarded me in my girl's attire, or his cry of mingled recognition and amazement as I pronounced his name.

"You are not—not the girl I came here to fetch?" he faltered.

I hung my head, and released him from my embrace.

"You will not care for me now," I replied, feeling keenly how the confession of my sex dealt a blow at all our dreams of enterprise and adventure by sea and land.

But he caught me by my hands and drew me to him.

"I will love you," he cried, in a transport, "better—twenty times better. I will never love any one but you. I will live for you; I will die for you!"

So happy, so unspeakably happy, at these words, I could only cling about his neck and weep. There were tears glistening in his eyes too.

It was Violet Maldon who reluctantly recalled us to the remembrance of our position. Her presence in the old home surprised Oliver not a little; but a brief explanation satisfied him. Then we hastily learned the cause of his presence there. All he could say was that Jerome, his father, as he called him, had been conveyed with Gasparo to prison, on some charge in which they were mutually concerned, and that he had contrived to convey the key of the house to Oliver, with instructions that he should release the only human being—a child—who, to Jerome's knowledge, had been left behind in the house. The instructions added that I was to be conveyed to Jerome's lodgings, and there carefully watched and tended.

Little did he imagine who it was that he was destined thus to rescue from starvation and a lingering death. Indeed, though he had never ceased to think of me, so strong was the singular attachment that had sprung up between us, he had never even hoped that we should meet again.

In answer to a question, he informed me that it was Jerome who was in hiding at Becky Twinch's house on the night we arrived there, and that, when he retreated in the night, he insisted on Oliver accompanying him. As for me, Jerome only regarded me as some companion picked up by the way-side, and of no farther consideration. Out of some sense of honour and manliness, Oliver had kept my secret, hoping that, though he was disappointed in his bright dream, I might realize mine, and succeed in reaching the sea-shore, and finding a ship there.

Now that we were re-united, I was indifferent to my own fate; I cared not what might happen, since Oliver was restored to me and loved me.

It was very different as to my companion.

Violet's only safety lay in flight. The terrible ordeal to which she had been subjected left no question on that point. Flight, immediate flight, offered the only solution to the difficulty in which she was placed. That might enable her to baffle her enemies: that would, at least, place her out of their power; and the opportunity now presented itself.

The direction to be taken and the place of security to be chosen presented difficulties; but in the absence of Gasparo and Jerome, these did not appear overwhelming. Unless, indeed, other enemies, unknown to the hapless victim of a dark conspiracy should be on the watch, prepared to recapture her.

Our chief difficulty lay in the want of money.

With that it would have been easy to secure accommodation at an hotel, where Violet might remain until the morning; but we were penniless.

What, then, was to be done?

In the emergency, Violet suddenly remembered the Indian shawl, with its rich embroidery of gold, which had formed her coverlet, while she remained in the corpse-like state in which I had discovered her.

Would it not be possible, she asked, to obtain a night's shelter on the value of that as a deposit? Tomorrow she might communicate with her lawyers, and obtain advances sufficient to redeem it.

To this Oliver, who had gained experience in the hard battle of the world, objected, on the ground that it might arouse suspicions which the strange nature of Violet's story would not serve to allay.

"Better to raise money upon it," he suggested, "if ever so little. I will take it: the pawbrokers know me, and there will be no difficulty."

Violet hesitated.

"But—but it is not mine," she said.

"Is anything yours?" Oliver retorted. "Is it with Gasparo's leave that your life is yours?"

"True—most true: and it will be so easy to regain possession of it. You are right. Let us act on your advice. Albany himself could not blame me."

"You speak of Albany Seymour?" cried Oliver.

"Yes: you know him?"

"I have heard his name mentioned by those who mean him no good."

"He is in danger? You think so, and it is for my sake? Oh, what have I done, that I should be so unhappy? What miserable destiny is mine, that I cannot live without danger to him I would give my life to save!"

Weak, exhausted, and overcome with exhaustion, she sank upon a chair, and burst into a paroxysm of weeping. It was only Oliver's assurance that he had little doubt of being able to communicate with Albany in the morning that restored her.

Then the suggested arrangements were completed. It was proposed that Violet and I should betake ourselves to a remote corner of the Green Park, which would not be difficult to reach, and that Oliver having seen us there, should depart at once in search of the necessary supplies.

With this understanding, and with infinite fear and trepidation, we stole out by the side entrance of the old house, in which we seemed to leave behind the echo of our retreating footsteps, and passing one by one down the long passage emerged into the street.

One by one we proceeded when the street was gained, Oliver leading the way, and we following at such distances as enabled us to keep him in view, while each strove to appear independent of the other.

It was a long, long way, and that walk I shall never forget. The fear of being watched was strong upon us. Someone was following, someone would dart upon us from a doorway or down a passage, or someone would confront us, and make us prisoners. I could not get the terror of this out of my mind, and Violet, I could see, was ready to drop with a like feeling. At last we were in the park, the jostling crowd were out of view, there were the fresh trees and the green grass, looking calm and peaceful in the twilight, and the terror died out of my heart.

We sat down, Violet and I, in the gloom of a dark chestnut with outspreading branches, and then Oliver gave one hasty pressure of the hand, and started on his errand, assuring us in a bright, cheery voice of his speedy return, and bidding us have no fear.

No fear!

Why did his very words conjure up an ominous foreboding?

Why did my eyes strain after his retreating form anxiously, hungrily, as if I was destined never to behold it more?

I see him now as he disappeared between the trees. I feel now the sense of utter loneliness that came upon me as he went. And in imagination I turn again towards Violet—brightly beautiful even in the gloom—and throwing my arms around her neck strive to relieve my heart of its burden in a passion of tears.

Hours pass.

It is dark. The stars are out. The night air is chilly. We are damp with the falling dews. We are alone, for the park has long been deserted. Hope has died out of our hearts; we are full of terrors, full of misgivings. In the desperation of despair we cling one to the other, each knowing what is in the other's mind, each fearing to say it.

It is Violet whose white lips presently falter out:

"Can he have betrayed us?"

And I start from her, fiercely indignant, hurt and pained beyond all words.

"Betray! He betray!" I cry out, "oh, it is so wicked, so wicked to say that!"

She begs my pardon abjectly, and we are reconciled, and sit there silently watching the night through. The darkness goes, and the stars fade, and dawn comes; but he has not returned.

Day finds us sitting there still—alone!

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

PROFESSOR AGASSIZ, in a recent letter, reports the discovery of 1,400 new species of fish and animals, a number far greater than he had any reason to expect.

EXPERIMENTS WITH NITRO-GLYCERINE.

We find the following results of experiments with nitro-glycerine, or blasting oil:—

At the Cleveland mine, on the 2nd April, the first attempt was made in a hole 5 ft. deep and extremely strong, charged with half a pound of oil. It opened up the "shot," but did not throw out the ore. The second hole was 15 ft. deep and 12 ft. back from fan, loaded with 5 lb. of oil. Eighteen hours afterwards 3 ft. of sand was taken from the top, 7 ft. of sand remaining over the first charge. A small tin cartridge containing three ounces of oil was inserted on the top, and covered with sand again. On firing the cartridge the original 5 lb. exploded at the same time, and "threw" ore 3 ft. below the bottom of said holes, opening a good crack. One keg of powder in three shots would have done the same execution, but I think some of the oil must have been wasted. The third hole was 15 ft. deep, 11 ft. from the face, on a ledge of 19 ft.; this hole being loaded with 7 lb. of oil in a tin cartridge. About 450 tons of ore, down to the edge, was thrown down. The same execution could have been done with three kegs of powder in three shots.

At the Jackson mine, March 24th, the experiments were conducted on the slope in No. 1 opening, where the iron ore is exceedingly hard and tenacious. The first trial was with a drill hole 2 in. in diameter and 5 ft. 6 in. deep, into which a tin cartridge containing 3 lb. of blasting oil was inserted, and fired by means of a common fuse attached to a wooden fuse charged with a small quantity of gunpowder. The effect of this shot was simply astonishing, and I am of opinion that the same result could not have been obtained with blasting powder, except by shooting from four to six times. A less quantity of it in this drill hole would have been sufficient.

Two more holes were then charged, one of them 2 in. in diameter and 3 ft. 6 in. deep, with 1 lb. of oil in a cartridge. This was a very strong hole, and had but a poor chance to break, but was put down purposely to see what effect the oil would have in a strong bottom; it did not throw out the ore, but made several cracks across the top. The other hole was the same diameter, and 5 ft. deep, charged with a cartridge containing 1½ lb. of oil. This missed fire.

The consequence was the small quantity of gunpowder in the fuse did not blow out the cord, but forced the top off. Another cartridge, containing two ounces of oil, was put on top of the one that missed, and the drill hole filled with loose sand; this was fired, when both cartridges fired simultaneously, breaking out all the ore, and a little below the bottom of the drill hole. This same hole in our usual way of blasting, would have required at the least 15 lb. of powder. The ore was thrown with such force against the opposite side wall that it was broken up into small pieces, but if this had been thrown out with powder, there is no doubt we should have had to put in three or four block holes to accomplish the same result.

The fourth and last hole was of the same diameter and 4 ft. deep. The oil was poured into this hole to a height of 7 in. The patent fuse lowered on to it, and the hole filled up with sand, it was then fired. The effect of this shot was even more satisfactory than the others. I believe it is better to use the oil without cartridge where practicable, as the strength lies more at the bottom of the hole than it would if placed in a cartridge.

On the same day Colonel Burstenbinder experimented at the Washington mine with his blasting oil. The first hole shot with it was 7 ft. deep and about

7 ft. strong in the bottom. It had a head wedged against it from the face of an angle of about 30 degs. The amount of oil used was 2 lb. It tore out a considerable portion of the ore intended to be thrown out, and loosened up as much more as an ordinary sand blast, which about one keg and a half of powder with ordinary good luck would have thrown out. The next hole shot was a block hole; the piece of ore was 4 ft. thick and weighed about five tons. The hole was 14 in. deep, and the oil used was three ounces; the effect of this shot was a perfect success; it tore the block of ore in small pieces. The next hole shot was 5 ft. deep and pretty strong on one side; the oil used was 1½ lb. It was a perfect success, it tore up and loosened up forty or fifty tons.

March 26th, another test was made at the Jackson iron mine, Negannee. A drill hole 2 in. diameter, 5 ft. 8 in. deep, put into a ridge at the bottom of a large shaft 25 ft. deep, bound on both sides and back by a solid wall of ore, loaded with 5½ lb. of oil, without cartridge, and fired by means of a percussion cap. This shot would have required at least 30 lb. of powder and four drill holes. The relative estimated cost of powder and blasting oil is as follows:

WITH POWDER.		Dollars.
Drilling 20 ft. at 2-50 dols. per foot.....		50-00
80 lb. powder at 25 cents per pound.....		7-50
Cost of labour in sledging the ore to leave it in its present condition.....		10-00
Total.....		67-50
WITH BLASTING OIL.		Dollars.
Drilling 5 ft. 8 in. at 2-50 per foot.....		14-15
5½ lb. of oil at 2-15 per pound.....		11-80
Total.....		25-95

The ground in which this hole was placed is of a particularly hard nature, known as such to all practical miners in this country, and accounts for the high cost of drilling. The above experiments are attested by the superintendents of the respective mines.

SLATES.—The test of a superior slate is its ability to remain unbroken, after being made red hot in a furnace, and suddenly immersed in cold water, while at that heat.

A NATURAL BAROMETER.—Mr. Wm. McClathy, says, "as I know that you wish to give every information that would be of use to your numerous readers, I send you some remarks I have made on the changes which have taken place in the atmosphere for forty years past. I first observed in the rows of young Weymouth (or White Pine) trees in my nurseries, that the last year's growth and all the leaves or spines stand straight upright in dry weather, and on the least change to rain or snow the branches bend, and the leaves fall back and appear in a dying state, even before the snow or rain commences. When a change comes for dry weather, they all recover again, and remain so until the next change is going to take place, giving the farmer warning in time for him to prepare for it. The White Pine (*P. strobus*) grows in this neighbourhood spontaneously. It is easily transplanted, if removed when about a foot high. It soon makes a beautiful tree, and might be called the Farmer's Barometer."

MAKING GLASS CELLS.—The way to make cells out of thin microscopic glass, described in Dr. Carpenter's work, is well known, and after numerous experiments, I found that a somewhat similar method could be applied to thicker glass. I procured two pieces of steel, or iron made hard as possible, the size and shape of cell required—in short, two steel cells, the pattern of the glass one wanted, and about one-tenth of an inch thick. I then cut some squares of ordinary window glass the exact size of the steel cells; on each side of a glass square I then, with marine glue, cement one of the steel plates, taking care to have the edges of the two steel plates and glass square all parallel; if the cementing is perfect, a hole may now be made with impunity through the glass by a few taps with the point of a rat-tail file, and enlarged with the file to the size of the holes in the steel plates; heat is then applied to liberate the glass cell from between the steel ones, a fresh square put in, and the process repeated. It is obvious that cells of any size and shape can be made in this manner, and by working with four or five pairs of plates at once a gross of cells may be made in a very short time, at a cost of a few pence—a considerable saving, as glass cells are rather expensive to buy. The same plan will, of course, answer for making a hole through the centre of a slide. This crown or plate glass is easily perforated, and makes a most useful cell. I have tried to cut cells from tube with a cutting saw and emery in a lathe, but the less said of this the better it can only be done with proper apparatus.



[DRAYTON TRAVERS'S STRANGE VISITOR.]

VIVIAN TRAVERS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE room into which Drayton Travers had ushered his singular guest was, as has been said, his private study. It contained a book-case full of choice books, a writing-desk, a few fine pictures, a sumptuous lounge, &c.

The carpet looked like a thick bed of shaded green moss, sprinkled with forest leaves, and the curtains were of warm-hued damask over lace.

A fire was burning cheerily in the grate, and an easy-chair and footstool were drawn up before it ready for Mr. Travers's use, this being the room where most of his mornings were spent.

Mrs. Hawkers, as the strange woman had called herself, took possession of the easy-chair in the most complacent manner possible. She then turned a curious gaze about the apartment, expressing her opinion only by grunts, that were significant of envy and dissatisfaction.

Mr. Travers noticed none of these proceedings. He took several turns across the floor, walking impatiently and restlessly, and seemingly endeavouring to conquer the elements that were warring in his soul.

At length he paused abruptly before the chair in which the woman was sitting, and said, sternly:

"What do you mean by coming here? You solemnly promised never to come near me again—never to molest me or mine."

Mrs. Hawkers covered a moment before his gaze, and then replied, with a tone half defiant:

"I know I agreed never to molest you again, but the thousand pounds you gave me couldn't last for ever, and what was I to do when it was all gone? I've worked hard enough to have 'em back, but keeping boards don't pay, for I've tried it the last ten years, and what else am I to do? If I had some young person around me who could do such things as them, and she indicated by a nod of her head a pair of handsomely-embroidered slippers before the fire, "I could sell 'em for money enough to live on comfortably."

Mr. Travers hastily removed the slippers—Vivian's work—from the woman's observation, shuddering as he did so.

"Well, what do you want?" he demanded, after a minute's silence.

"That's a cool question," returned Mrs. Hawkers, with an unpleasant smile. "I want everything. Look at my feet, my dress, my cloak—"

"I understand your necessities," interrupted Mr. Travers. "Tell me how much money you want—for what sum you will agree to go away and never cross my path again."

The woman hesitated, glanced at the furniture of the apartment, as if to calculate his wealth, and then replied, cautiously:

"I hain't quite made up my mind. Before I do, I want to see the girl—"

"You cannot see her," was the determined response.

"Your business is with me, and when we have finished it, you will go directly from the house, seeing no one."

"You don't seem to think I've got no feelin'!" exclaimed Mrs. Hawkers, with a pretended whine. "I hain't seen the girl in over sixteen years. I want to see how she looks—if she's well treated and happy. I s'pose she don't know that you ain't her father, nor no relation to her, and that I am her own mother?"

Percy Lorimer, from his position at the door, started so suddenly on hearing this observation that he very nearly betrayed his presence and dishonourable occupation.

"She believes herself the daughter of Mrs. Travers and myself, and heaven forbid that she should ever learn that we are not her parents. As to your pretence of motherly feeling, Mrs. Hawkers, it does not deceive me. You care nothing for the child beyond the money she has been the means of bestowing upon you. You cared nothing for her in her helpless infancy, and I sometimes almost believe that she is not your child."

"She is," cried the woman, with eager vehemence. "I have proved to you more'n once, beyond all manner of doubt, that she is my own daughter."

"I know you showed me the doctor's certificate of her birth, and the testimony of your neighbours that she was your child. But she resembles you in nothing, and you were so willing to sell her—"

"What else could I do, and me starvin'?" demanded the woman. "I don't know who she resembles, for she was but a year or two old when I sold her to you, but she promised to look like her father, who was as real a gentleman as ever trod shoe-leather, if I do say it. I told you once that I had been an actress in my young days, and while I was one I married a broken-down, dissipated young fellow—a gentleman's son—who had been cast off by his relations. I supported him by my profession till my baby was born, and then my place at the theatre was given to some one else, and my husband died, and so I wandered out to where you lived. As to her not looking like me—she might look worse, I guess."

She pushed back her bonnet, leaving her face entirely unshaded. It had a fierce, hungry look, but was not altogether ill-featured, although its expression was decidedly repulsive.

Mr. Travers made no reply to her remark, and she soon resumed:

"If you don't want to pay me nothing more for her, just say the word. I'll go to Vivian and tell her that I'm her own mother, and sufferin' for the necessities of life. If she's got any heart, she'll go home with me and put her learnin' and accomplishments to good use by earnin' my livin'."

"Cease your threats! I have not refused to grant any reasonable demand you may make. How much money will purchase your absence and silence?"

A scheming look appeared on the woman's face, and, with the air of one who fears she may be demanding too much, she answered:

"I want five hundred pounds. Give me that and you shall never see me again."

"It shall be yours," responded Mr. Travers, arising, and proceeding to his desk. "With five hundred pounds you might buy yourself a little home at the West, with land enough to ensure you a comfortable living. I advise you to do so."

He waited a moment for a reply, but receiving none, unlocked his desk, opened an inner drawer, and proceeded to count out the sum agreed upon from a large package of notes.

Mrs. Hawkers half arose, eyeing the treasure with a keen, fierce gaze, and her hands clutched nervously, as if eager to handle so much money.

As Mr. Travers closed his desk, however, she resumed her seat and her former position.

"Here is the sum you have demanded," remarked Mr. Travers, advancing to her side. "You solemnly promise, if I give you this, never to show yourself to Vivian, never to let her know that she is not the child of myself and wife by blood, and never again to cross my path, nor that of any member of my family?"

"I promise all that," responded the woman. "I am willing to swear, if necessary—"

"I do not want your oath. You gave it when I bought Vivian of you, and you have broken it this morning. I trust your promise will be better kept."

"It will. It was only sufferin' and starvation made me come here now. I was livin' in my garret in London, without a fire, and with barely enough food to keep life in my body, when I got hold of one of the morning papers, and saw in it a speech of Mr. Travers. I knew in a minute 'twas you. In another part of the same paper I came across an

account of a ball, and read that Mrs. and Miss Travers were the belles of the evening. The paper described their splendid dresses, and dimens, and laces. And so I thought if you'd spend so much money on Vivian, you'd give her poor mother something to keep her out of the poor-house. With that idea, I sold off every stick of furniture I owned—got money enough to come here."

"You had better leave to-day. I desire to run no risk of Vivian's seeing you. Here is your money. With this payment let our knowledge of each other end."

Mrs. Hawkers muttered an assent, took the money greedily, and counted it again and again, with the hope that there might be a note or two more than the stipulated amount, and with the fear that there might be a note or two less.

Satisfied at last that the sum was correct, she divided the package into two parcels, the larger of which she thrust into her bosom. She then deposited the smaller in an old, grossy wallet which she drew from her pocket, and which she then restored to that receptacle.

Mr. Travers had resumed his restless walk across the floor, taking little note of her movements.

As Mrs. Hawkers bent forward to put on her over-shoes, she said,

"Ain't I going to see Mrs. Travers?"

"No. Mrs. Travers is unable to see you. She knows you are here, but she does not wish to meet you."

"And Vivian—can't I have a look at her—my own child?" whined the woman.

"No!" was the firm and resolute response. "She is your child only by the accident of birth. She is mine by love and adoption, and you will do well to forget that nature ever formed any tie between her and you."

The woman scowled sullenly, and Mr. Travers proceeded to state explicitly his demands in regard to her future movements, all of which Mrs. Hawkers acceded to, giving a solemn promise to carry out his wishes.

When at length she arose from her seat, declaring her intention to depart, Percy Lorimer, who had overheard the entire conversation from his position outside the door, silently arose and glided down the stairs, gaining the drawing-room unseen.

He placed the drawing-room door ajar, that he might witness the woman's departure, and, from the confusion into which his mind had been plunged by the revelation he had overheard, proceeded to evolve a plan that he hoped would tend greatly to his own advancement and happiness.

In a few moments he heard the footsteps of Mr. Travers descending the stairs, followed by the shuffling, slipshod movements of the repulsive-looking stranger.

The woman paused in the hall, as if loth to exchange its genial temperature for the penetrating March winds awaiting her outside the door, and her unwilling host was obliged to tell her plainly that she must go without delay, lest she should be seen by some member of the family.

"I'm a-goin'—I'm a-goin'!" she responded, retreating reluctantly towards the door, and gathering her tattered garments closer around her ill-protected chest.

At this juncture the door of Mrs. Travers's boudoir opened, and Vivian, radiant in her beauty, appeared on the threshold.

Mrs. Hawkers regarded her in astonishment, surveying her person and attire in amazement, muttering: "Mrs. Travers! Why, she hasn't changed a bit in sixteen years! Only, she's younger, if anything."

Vivian directed but one glance at Mrs. Hawkers, but that look was full of pity as she marked her unsuitable garb, and full of distrust as she noticed her repulsive countenance.

It was evident that Mrs. Hawkers did not recognize a single feature of the young girl's countenance, and that nature failed to vibrate a single chord in Vivian's heart at the sight of the unwelcome guest.

"Excuse me, papa," said Vivian, retreating a step, "but I thought I heard only your step. Mamma is ill—"

"Yes, I understand. I will come to her in a moment," replied Mr. Travers, regaining his momentarily lost self-possession. "Remain with her till I come."

"That girl Vivian!" muttered the woman, with a start, gazing hard at the lovely vision, with its clustering curls, its sparkling face, its robes of rose-coloured cashmere and frills of lace. "It don't seem possible!"

Vivian failed to hear the exclamation, departing at her father's command, and closing the door of the boudoir behind her.

Mrs. Hawkers cast an apprehensive, yet searching glance at Mr. Travers after the maiden's withdrawal, and then, startled at his pallor, turned to go.

"I'm satisfied now I have seen her," she said. "Neither she nor you will ever look upon my face again."

With these words she opened the door, stood a moment irresolutely on the steps, and then proceeded slowly down the avenue.

Mr. Travers closed the door after her, with a sigh of relief, and then hastened to his wife.

And then Percy Lorimer stole out into the hall, listened to assure himself that there was no one near to notice his movements, hurriedly donned his hat and overcoat, both of which articles were suspended from the branches of the hat-rack, and then he noiselessly made his egress from the house.

A glance behind him, when he had gained the street, assured him that no one had observed his departure, and he then looked hurriedly up and down the street in search of Mrs. Hawkers.

The morning was too wild and gusty for many women to be abroad, and he had no difficulty in perceiving the form he sought, recognizing her by her peculiarly shabby and unseemable garments.

With an ejaculation expressive of delight, he drew up his coat collar, muffling his features, and hastened after her, taking care not to approach too closely to her.

It was evidently his design to track her to her home.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER Vivian had withdrawn from the library with Percy Lorimer, Philip Aynsourt gave himself up for a few moments to the happiness with which she had inspired him.

That his love was returned by the daughter of his employer, the radiant young beauty, before whose shrine the noblest men at the capital delighted to render homage, seemed almost incredible.

How he longed to prove to her his great love. How he wished that something might happen, that he could prove to her and the world that he loved her for herself alone, and not for her wealth and position in society.

Banishing, at length, these dreams, which are common to all enthusiastic lovers, the secretary resumed his labours, it being one of his principles to prefer duty before pleasure.

His pen flew over the paper as if winged, and it was not long before his day's labour was completed, and the result made manifest in a pile of letters, neatly addressed and stamped, ready for the post.

And then the silvery tinkle of a bell announced that luncheon was ready.

The secretary hastened to his room, on the third floor, to perfect his toilet, and remove one or two infinitesimal ink-spots upon his long, white fingers, and returned as the bell sounded a second time, making his way to the dining-room, the apartment adjoining Mrs. Travers's sitting-room, or boudoir.

The dining-room was elegantly fitted up, with hangings of dark green, enlivened with gold, carpet to match, furniture of polished oak, and a table adorned liberally with silver crystal and porcelain.

At the moment of Aynsourt's entrance, Vivian was alone in the room. She stood near the window, in a drooping attitude, but as her lover made his appearance, she turned towards him with a smile and blush.

"We take our luncheon alone to-day, Philip," she said, endeavouring to speak lightly. "I will take mamma's place behind the coffee-urn. Have you seen Cousin Percy?"

"Not since he came to the library in search of you," was the reply.

"I suppose he felt lonely, having no one to talk to, and has gone out," declared Vivian, taking her seat, and proceeding to dispense the coffee to her lover and herself. "Papa and mamma seem both to be ill, and have gone to the study, where I have been with them."

"I hope there is nothing serious the matter with them," remarked the secretary, in a tone of deep concern.

"Oh, they are getting better now, I think. They seem very nervous, as if they had heard bad news, as I presume they have. They do not like me out of their sight, and enjoined me to hasten back to them as soon as I had finished my luncheon."

"Do you think they can know of, and be angry at, my presumption in loving you?" inquired Aynsourt.

"No, Philip. I have said nothing to papa, preferring that you should do so. I left Cousin Percy with papa this morning, bringing mamma in here, intending to tell her our secret, but I couldn't summon sufficient courage. I will do it this evening. After a while, papa joined us, and seemed about to say something of importance, when Dennis entered, saying that there was a dreadful woman in the hall, asking for Mr. Travers. I think it was her coming that made my parents so ill—for she was a most disagreeable-

looking woman," added Vivian, innocently. "It made me shudder to look at her."

The lovers continued to converse, trifling with the many dainties before them, but neither ate much, and the maiden at length arose and excused herself, adding,

"I shall probably not see you again until dinner, Philip, as I intend spending the afternoon with papa and mamma."

"Then I will post the letters and make a visit to a relative of mine who lives at Town—my father's only and elder brother."

As he spoke, Philip opened the door for Vivian to pass out, and followed her, going to his own room, while she entered her father's study.

A few minutes later Philip left the house, warmly attired, to encounter the unpleasant weather, and proceeded to post the letters he had written in the morning.

This duty accomplished, he hailed an omnibus, and after alighting from it, walked some distance, slackening his steps at last as he approached an old, deserted-looking mansion, which was half-hidden from view by the funeral evergreens around it.

The gate was unbarred and broken in several places; the walk leading to the house was littered with the last year's leaves from oak and maple trees, which were interspersed with thin, frozen pools of water; while the front portico, evidently once a stately affair, was now in a ruinous condition.

All these things were noticed by Philip, but in a way that showed he was used to them, and would have been surprised at any change for the better.

Ascending the steps, he sounded the heavy brass knocker, and then, without waiting for his summons to be answered, tried the door, found it unlocked, and entered the house.

The hall in which he found himself was gloomy, and its walls were so dingy that it would have been difficult to have decided upon the original colour of the paper with which they were covered.

There was no carpet, but instead a thick layer of dust, that arose in puffs and clouds with every footfall of the intruder.

Advancing to the extremity of the corridor, Philip opened a door to the right and entered a room dingier, dustier, and gloomier than the hall.

There were two windows to this room, but they were so covered with dust and cobwebs that a view through them would have been an impossibility. As they fronted a dreary wilderness of a garden, their want of transparency was not, perhaps, to be deeply lamented.

There was no carpet to this room, no fire in the grate, which served as a repository for broken eggshells, ink-bottles, etc.

The furniture comprised only an old wood-bottomed chair or two, and several rows of rough pine shelves covering one side of the apartment.

These shelves were laden with books, many of them stripped of their covering, and the rest bound in the plainest and ugliest manner. They served also as a ladder, for a tin basin filled with remnants of food was stowed away snugly in a corner of the lowest shelf.

The occupants of this room—for damp, cold and gloomy as it was, it was occupied—were two in number.

The more important was a man who sat before the rough shelves upon a rude chair, with a coverless book in his hands.

His clothing was coarse and incongruous, besides being too short at the ankles and wrists. Upon his head he wore an old-fashioned flannel night-cap, made much after the pattern of the school-boy's aversion, the fool's cap, and the long peak of this article dropped nearly to his shoulder.

He was not ill-favored, nor unhandsome, except for the disfiguring expression of bitterness and misanthropy which seemed habitual to him. He looked what he was—a miserable, unhappy, old man.

His companion was a dog, of noble breed, gigantic in form, with sagacious eyes, and watchful demeanour. He seemed to have more regard for comfort than his master had, for he had established himself upon a tattered blanket at the old man's feet, and was curled up in a position most conducive to warmth.

As Philip entered, and paused near the door, the dog raised his head, uttering a low growl, causing his master to look up at the intruder.

"Hush, Hamilton, my dear fellow," said the old man, patting the dog in a friendly manner, but without a farther look at Philip. "It is but a little animated clay that has disturbed our studies, Sir William—that's all."

The dog seemed contented at this explanation, and the old man resumed his studies, while Philip took possession of the unoccupied chair, saying, with a shiver:

"Uncle Hugh, you ought really to have a fire. Your room seems even more cold and damp than the outer world—"

"If you dislike it, why come here?" asked his uncle, drily.

"I don't like it," was the frank response; "but I like you, Uncle Hugh, and I don't want you to freeze and starve to death."

"Heat and cold are but relative terms," interrupted Hugh Aynsourt, as if eager for a discussion on the subject. "This room that seems so chilly to your pampered system would seem warm to the inhabitants of the ice-huts in the polar regions. As to food, why should we be the slaves of habit? Shall man be more luxurious than unreasoning beasts? The polar bear exists through his long winters without a morsel of food, and in that respect the superior of the boasted lord of creation."

"But, my dear uncle," said Philip, in a troubled tone, "man was not made for such a life, although you seem to be trying the experiment."

"I am a Spartan—a stoic—a disciple of the great philosophers," declared his uncle, waving one hand towards his book-shelves. "I hold daily communion with Plato, Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, Anaximander, and all the great teachers of philosophy. I should have been born in those grand old days. The world is now too degenerate, too luxurious for me."

He paused, sighed, and continued:

"Since you were here last I have had a proof of the foolishness of the present generation."

Philip inquired how he had acquired this evidence, and his uncle proceeded to relate that one very cold morning of the previous week a couple of neighbours forced an entrance to his house to see if he were dead, there being no sign of life about the premises. He had favoured them with his views on philosophy, &c., and they had expressed their opinion that "his brain was cracked."

"I challenged them to meet me in the forum," concluded the old man, "and discuss with me the great principles of existence. The learned multitude shall decide between us. Socrates was persecuted, and shall I escape? Unable to reply, my neighbours fled, abashed, and will disturb me no more with their importunities."

"But, uncle," said Philip, earnestly, "you are ruining your health, and your life must be very lonely and miserable at times. You need society, warmth, light, and the comforts of existence."

As he spoke, he drew from his overcoat pocket a package of cold, cooked meats he had purchased at an eating-house on his way, and beckoned the dog, who quickly obeyed his summons.

"There, take that to your master," said Philip, putting the ends of the string that confined the package into the dog's mouth.

"Master!" repeated Hugh Aynsourt, reproachfully. "Do you know that you are speaking to Sir William Hamilton, Philip—Sir William Hamilton—whose soul transmigrated into the noble animal of the canine species who shares my labours and existence? Do not say 'master' to him, but friend. Come to your friend, Sir William."

The dog obeyed, and was then politely requested to deposit the package on a shelf, which he did, although manifesting some anxiety to explore its contents.

The old man then resumed his studies, oblivious of his nephew's presence, until Philip broke the silence by inquiring,

"Uncle Hugh, are you poor?"

"Poor? No true philosopher can be poor. I am a second Diogenes."

"I mean, uncle, have you sufficient money to live comfortably. You were once rich, I have heard—"

"And you are anxious to know how much I shall leave to you?" exclaimed the philosopher, bitterly. "You're like all the world, Philip—selfish and grasping. But you will get nothing from me. My death shall not benefit you. I have enough for Sir William and myself; let that assurance suffice you."

"You mistake, uncle," replied Philip, gently, yet his face flushing with indignation at his uncle's false imputation. "I wish only to make you comfortable. If you have money, why not repair this old house, warm up the rooms, engage a servant, and live more like a reasonable being? It seems to me it would be more philosophical to do so."

"That's because you know nothing about it. The body should be kept in subjection to the mind. No doubt you would like me to repair the house ready for your occupancy when I shall have done with it; but I am not to be duped by you or any one else. Mercenary, like all the rest of the world."

Philip restrained the impatient answer that rose to his lips, remembering that he had heard that his uncle had experienced a disappointment in love in early life, and that this disappointment had embittered his whole existence.

The girl to whom he had been engaged to be married, and who had professed to love him, receiving his lavish presents and attentions, had eloped, on the very day appointed for their marriage, with another man.

This blow had made of Hugh Aynsourt a bitter misanthrope. He secluded himself from his old friends, living alone in his old house, neglecting his property, which was left to accumulate to vast proportions, and took refuge in philosophy, believing, or affecting to believe, that honour and virtue had ceased to exist.

His very existence was now nearly forgotten, save by his nephew and a few others. His neighbours believed him harmlessly insane, and others called him a miser, declaring that he had chests filled with gold in his cellar, and that his seclusion was caused by his fearing to leave his hoarded treasure.

Only Philip, of all the world, knew the old man's intellect to be unclouded, and he believed a heart to be hidden somewhere beneath the surface of that cold and bitter misanthropy.

His heart warmed towards his singular relative, who believed, or affected to believe, that he was actuated by motives of avarice and greed in visiting him, and often assured him that his garb of hypocrisy was perfectly transparent to his philosophical old uncle.

"I am glad to see you don't try to deny that you are mercenary and grasping," resumed the philosopher, after a pause, during which he vainly waited for a denial from his nephew. "You couldn't deceive me if you were to try. I dare say you came here to-day hoping to find me in an apoplectic fit. I don't doubt it at all. But we will dismiss the subject, and discuss this argument of Plato's."

Philip could not resist smiling at the idea of his cadaverous, half-starved relative having a fit of apoplexy, but his amusement found no expression. He gave his attention to the argument broached by his uncle, who advanced subtle points, asking his nephew to answer or confute them if he could, but it is scarcely necessary to state that the secretary found himself no match for the practised philosopher beside him.

"You do very well, Philip, very well for a man of this age," commented Hugh Aynsourt, rather gruffly. "I dare say you studied philosophy in order to flatter me, and win your way into my favour. But I see through your arts. Besides, I can't be flattered. And I've no money to leave you—not a penny. Go home. I don't want to be disturbed longer. And don't come again very soon. Sir William can do my marketing, so if you come I shall know your object."

Philip was loth to obey this command, having come with the hope of winning his relative to a more comfortable mode of existence. He could not bear to return to his warm and cosy apartments at Mr. Travers's, knowing that his only living relative was fireless and comfortless in his dreary home. He could not bear to think of sitting down to the luxurious tables of his employer, where every dainty of every season tempted the eye and palate, and know that his uncle's dinner was a crust, and his only beverage a cup of cold water.

These thoughts found utterance in earnest and affectionate words, which made no impression whatever upon their object.

Hugh Aynsourt took up his book, and appeared to be absorbed in its contents, not deigning a look or word to his nephew, who continued to plead with him until his voice trembled with discouragement.

The old man's face continued remarkably placid, but a sneering smile finally crept about his mouth, showing that he was not insensible to the words he had heard.

Noting the expression, Philip arose, buttoned his coat closer, took his hat, and prepared to depart.

"Good-bye, uncle," he said, holding out his hand.

The philosopher affected not to see it, and evidently considered it would be a waste of words to reply to the parting salutation, for he did not open his mouth, or even look up from his book.

Sir William Hamilton was, however, more polite to the departing guest, giving him a wag of the head that might very well pass for a bow.

After a moment's farther scrutiny of the bare and desolate room, Philip quietly laid his pen beside the package of food he had brought, and went out from his uncle's presence and the gloomy old dwelling, with his soul troubled on account of his relative's apparent poverty, and worse than comfortless existence.

When the slamming of the gate announced that he was really gone, the philosopher dropped his book on his knees, moved uneasily on his chair, and muttered:

"I wish he had never come here—that he would stay away for ever! It always does seem a little unpleasant after he goes. And Sir William likes him, too, and he doesn't often take a fancy to people. Perhaps, after all, he isn't altogether mercenary and hypocritical. It is possible that one true man may now exist on the earth, even if Diogenes spent a lifetime in a vain search for him. And Philip has an honest, earnest look, though possibly it is the result of hypocrisy. He is certainly either good and true, or a

most consummate hypocrite. It might be well for me, perhaps, to vary my study of philosophy by a study of human nature, and Philip should be the specimen selected. If I found him a man, and not an apology for a man, I would offer him a chair in my room here, the free use of my books, and an age with him in daily discussions of philosophy. And he should subdue his epicurean tastes for fire and dainty food, and such things, and become like me—a true philosopher! And if I find him like all other men—as I dare say he is—I can lock him out of my house. Yes, I think I will undertake the task. To-morrow, I will begin the study of my nephew!"

With this resolve, he picked up his book, and resumed reading.

(To be continued.)

SOMNAMBULISM.

THERE are the greatest varieties in the state of sleep-walkers; some hearing without seeing; others seeing without hearing. Some possessing a state of consciousness almost approaching to the waking state; others being in a condition little removed from perfect sleep. On this account, while one may manage to hold a conversation with one person, another is altogether incapable of forming a single idea, or giving it utterance, even if formed. For the same reason, the first, guided by a certain portion of intellect, pursues with safety his wild perambulations; while the second, driven on by the impulses of will, and his reasoning faculties locked up in utter stupor, staggers into dangers of every kind.

It is not always safe to arouse a sleep-walker; and many cases of the fatal effects thence arising have been detailed by authors. Nor is it at all unlikely that a person, even of strong nerves, might be violently agitated by awaking in a situation so different from that in which he went to bed.

Among other examples, that of a young lady who was addicted to this affection may be mentioned. Knowing her failing, her friends made a point of locking the door, and securing the window of her chamber, in such a manner that she could not possibly get out. One night these precautions were unfortunately overlooked, and, in a paroxysm of somnambulism, she walked into a garden behind the house. When there, she was recognized by some of the family, who were warned by the noise she made on opening the door; and they followed and awoke her; but such was the effect produced upon the nervous system, that she almost instantly expired.

HAMPSHIRE BEECHES.—The finest beech-trees in England are said to grow in Hampshire. The forest of St. Leonard, near Horsham, in Sussex, abounds with noble beech-trees. The cottagers of this forest inform you, that when St. Leonard wished to rest beneath these trees, he was disturbed during the day by the biting of vipers, and that his repose was broken in the night by the warbling of nightingales, and on that account they were removed by his prayers, since which time tradition says of this forest:—

The viper has never been known to sting,
Or the night-gale ever heard to sing.

A CURIOUS lawsuit has just taken place on account of an inkstand. This said inkstand, a *chef-d'œuvre* by Froment Meurice, had been presented to the charming writer Mery twenty years ago by the administration of the newspaper *La Presse*, as a testimony of gratitude for the immense success of his Indian novels, which he originally published as *feuilletons* in this paper. In the year 1847 the inkstand was pawned through the agency of a friend by M. Mery, in order to pay a gambling debt. The money has since been repaid by Mery, but the friend who had taken the inkstand to the pawn-office for him suddenly disappeared, and only very lately has the missing individual been traced. M. Mery determined to claim the restitution of his inkstand. The tribunal of Marseilles decided that the inkstand be immediately restored to M. Mery, under a penalty of 6,000*fr.*, which the pawnbroker is sentenced to pay unless he complies with the order of the Court.

CULTIVATION OF SWANS.—There are several persons who have the right of pasturage of swans on the river in the neighbourhood of Norwich, such as the Bishop, the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Stafford, Lord Orford, Sir T. Beauchamp, the Trustees of the Great Hospital, and the Mayor and Corporation, &c. The young cygnets are caught from the river in the second week in August, and, on an average, from one hundred to one hundred and thirty are brought into a square pond, 30 ft. long and 11 ft. wide, railed in, and filled from the river, through a sluice as the tide flows and reflows. Their food consists of the best barley, cut grass, and cabbages. The barley is placed in a trough, which floats up and down on the water between two posts. The barley is saturated in

water for twelve hours before being given to the swans, and each swan while fattening eats about one comb (that is, half a quarter) of barley. The green ment is thrown on the top of the water, and the birds nibble it off. They are fat, and in the best condition, from October to Christmas, when they are sold. After that they begin to fall off, even as much as 2 lb. in a fortnight. They do not assume their white feathers till the month of February; and in January they refuse their food, and will fat no more. They weigh, with their feathers, from 20 lb. to 30 lb. They are exceedingly good eating, the taste being between a hare and a wild duck, with a dash of venison. The soup made of their giblets is described as being something exceedingly good.

THE LIVID HAND.

The twilight is sad and dreary,
The winds blow wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And the little face at the window
Peers out into the night.

Longfellow

A TERRIBLE storm off the coast of Scotland was raging. Every frightened sea-bird had hastened inland, and folded its wings ere the tempest came down upon the water.

Every ship upon the sea had furled her sails; and every fisherman, gazing anxiously into the sullen sky, pointed the prow of his little skiff shoreward, straining each nerve to touch the beach ere the gale should break.

Mountain breakers came booming in and broke upon the hard shore with a noise like thunder; in little waves among the rocks the angry waters hissed and boiled, and rushed with hollow sound; and huge sea-capped waves lashed themselves into fury at the base of a high, rocky promontory, far up on whose summit a little thatched-roofed cottage perched like an eagle's eyrie—a bright glare from its windows streaming far and wide over the sea.

Inside the cottage a comely woman sat beside the hearth, with an anxious, troubled look upon her features—now lifting her head to listen to the roaring sea, then retouching the little tea-table spread with its clean delf ware and savoury fare—oat-meal cakes, golden butter, and snowy curd; or nervously arranging a suit of stout linsey-woolsey over a chair at the fireplace.

And a babe slept quietly in its little wooden cradle near the hearth; and at the window looking upon the sea, where a row of gleaming lamps had been hung, stood a fair-haired boy of five summers, shading his face with his little hand, and peering wishfully out into the darkness.

"Mither, mither!" exclaimed the boy, at length, "I see the ship! I see it! Father's ship's comin' in!" And he capered and danced with joy.

The woman at the fireplace came eagerly forward. But, looking from the window, she saw only the gleaming white tops of the breakers.

"Hoot, hoot, bairn!" she exclaimed. "Ye dinna ken yer father's vessel in such a storm as this! It could na reach port, wi' the wild sea boilin' over Cromarty Rocks yonder. He will keep in the offing all night, or put into harbour down the coast some-where—Captain Miller kens the sea better'n you or I, laddie! Come to yer supper, Hugh! Father'll na get in to-night, and ye'd better be in bed, laddie!"

Turning from the window, Mrs. Miller bustled about, set back the chair covered with garments from the fire; poured out a bowl of milk, and placed a high chair for the boy, then sat down at the fireplace.

No food could pass her own lips, for despite her brave words, a terrible fear for her husband abroad on the waters was at her heart; but for her child's sake, she strove to appear calm.

"Come, Hugh, laddie, come for yer supper, and then to bed, for ye must be up betimes to go down to the harbour wi' me, and see the ships come in. Come, Hugh!"

But the little form at the window did not stir. Instantly the child's eyes pierced the darkness, with straining eye-balls seeking to shape into form the white foam upon the crested breakers.

"Mither, mither," he cried, at length, "it is the ship I see!—father's and Donald Wilson's, and many more! There! see, mither! see!—father stands on the deck, and points—and they steer in—they're comin', mither! don't you see 'em? right among the rocks, there! and father is first—and he points, and points—look, mither!"

But the excited mother saw nothing save the crested waves.

"Come away, laddie! ye're daft, wi' watching there at the window. Come away, Hugh!" and she sought to lead him away.

"No, na, mither! Dinna make me go!" and the boy struggled free from her hand, and again pressed his little face close to the window-pane. "I maun see the ship—ah, mither, it's gone—gone! I canna see it—but, mither, the sea! the sea! it is all mad and foam'n', and I see father in it, and he reaches out his hand to us—don't you see it, mither?—father's hand! a great, white hand, right here!—close here!—take hold of it, mither, mither! And with a shrill scream of fear and superstition, the boy's strained eyeballs turned in their sockets, his little hand clenched in a convulsive grasp over one of his mother's, and he fell in a dead faint into her arms.

"Puir laddie—puir bairn!" sighed the mother, as she tenderly lifted him in her arms, and chafed his little wrist and temples; then, with one foot upon the rocker of her baby's cradle, watched Hugh's troubled, fitful slumbers through all that terrible night, while the storm rocked the little cottage to and fro, and beat at the windows like an angry demon, and the waves thundered on the beach below—puir laddie, he's his father's joy, and always claps his wee hands in glee when he spies the ship comin' in. But it is a terrible night! God keep my gude man safe on the stormy sea. He's been out many a wilder night, and why should I fear now?"

Yet all that night of storm, that pale woman sat silent and shuddering—her heart keeping time to the booming breakers and the trampling surf upon the shore; and little Hugh, tossing in broken slumbers, talked of the great white hand he had seen waving from the angry ocean.

And when the morning broke sweet and mild, and the waves rolled in upon the shore with a gentle murmur, and the little sea-faring village of Cromarty was early astir, a group of fishermen upon the harbour beach gathered about two or three wan, ghastly forms lying stark and cold upon the sand. And then Jane Miller, holding her boy by one hand and hugging her flaxen-haired babe tightly to her bosom, came with fierce strides down over the sands; and when she had looked upon one white, dead face, framed in its long golden curls all dragged with brown sea-weeds—when she had sat down on the wet beach, and drawn that head to her bosom, and kissed the lips and stroked every feature, uttering no words, only broken moans—then the rude fishermen, standing apart, whispered in husky tones, "It was a terrible storm last night! We shall hear o' mickle shipwrecks before sundown; but the salt sea never strangled the life out o' braver or blither laddie than puir Captain Miller!"

But little Hugh, standing pale and still beside his mother, uttered no cry or sob, as children do at the sight of death in its ghastliness nor shrank away in terror; he only stooped, and lifting one cold, livid hand in both his own, kissed it reverently, then laying it gently down upon the sands, whispered softly and superstitiously, "I knew it last night. I saw the hand! It was a wraith's, mither!"

In the little sea-side cottage of Cromarty, Hugh Miller grew up to vigorous boyhood. Very early he came to the knowledge that his mother, bereft of the husband of her youth, must lean upon her stalwart boy for support, and that very knowledge made him thoughtful for her comfort far beyond his years. Many a day he passed upon the blue waters in his little fisher-boat; and the fruits of these pious excursions, sold at the neighbouring town, added to their humble income.

But the lad, though yielding and obedient, and filial to the slightest wish of the maternal voice, still nursed in his heart a strange wild spirit of waywardness which manifested itself, not so much in action or speech, as in moods of gloomy thoughtfulness, when, for hours and days together, he would stray alone over the heather-clad hills and lonely moors, through the thick woods, or along the wild sea beach listening to the solemn voice of the ocean, or silently conning the mysterious lore of rock and shell; and it was in one of these little excursions, when his adventurous spirit had led him to penetrate into a deep cave under a wild ledgy promontory heading far out on the wild Scottish coast, that the tide, rushing into the rocky cavern, bubbled and boiled up around his youthful form, and he came nigh paying with his life the penalty of his rashness.

Perhaps thus and there, in these solitary rambles, alone, with nature and her wonderful works, the youth's mind was imbued with that love for those geological discoveries which he afterwards made, and which so enriched the lore of our age, and created Hugh Miller the prince of geologists. Certain it is, that the boy, imbued by the inspiration of Nature, discarded his books, threw his dry Latin grammar to the wind, and free from the thralldom of schools, passed the greater portion of his days in his explorations, till the little cottage on the cliff was in danger of being converted into a veritable museum and the young Hugh into a showman.

But one evil resulted from this wild, erratic life; it

begot in the lad a distaste for discipline, led him into many vagabondish adventures, and sometimes urged him into fray with where fouds with his young companions were the inevitable results of his desire to stand foremost and submit to no leader over him.

At length, a predatory excursion, in common with many other Cromarty boys, upon a fruit orchard, led to a punishment too public to suit the youthful hero's tastes—viz., at the hand of the village magistrate; and the valiant trespasser on fruit which was guarded as the golden apples of the Hesperides, took refuge in flight, and retreated to his quondam fastness, the inaccessible cave by the seaside, armed with two redoubtable weapons—the rusty barrel of a horse pistol, and an old bayonet.

Here, a day or two of starvation cooled his youthful ardour, and he emerged stealthily to seek by night the house of an uncle who acted as his guardian; and, after much persuasion, and the promise of a helping hand for the support of his mother, he followed his uncle's wish to become apprenticed to a mason of his native town.

Thus the wild, erratic youth, foregoing his olden rambles by the seaside and through the forests, set himself to work right earnestly, preparing himself by a useful occupation for the still farther knowledge of that science to which he afterwards wholly devoted himself.

So he passed his days in the labours of his arduous occupation, though his migratory nature continually prompted him to change the scene of his toils; now working a long day at his trade, now exploring at twilight the woods and sea-shores, still adding fossils, rocks and sea-weeds to his cabinet, and at evening arranging and labelling them, or, as youth of his ardent temperament are prone to do, scribbling verses under the fancied inspiration of the tuneful "Nine."

Thus Hugh Miller's life went by, with no heralding of his future greatness, and the embryo man of science bore no character among his associates other than "a flighty, good-for-nothing, clever sort of fellow."

Like a ship without a rudder, he drifted astray, blown by every chance wind, till another hand joined with his own, another voice gently reclaimed him, and by her kind and firm counsels led him into a new path whose end was Fame. And that gentle teacher, other great and good men have had before—was a wife!

The circumstances of their meeting were romantic. At Inverness, where the roving young man had gone to engage as a common mason, at Inverness dwelt a proud family—"of noble birth, though of somewhat decayed circumstances," and, like other proud families of Scotland, they boasted a beautiful daughter.

Now this beautiful daughter, though fully cognizant of her birth, and educated and refined, yet was none the less prevented from pausing one evening in her accustomed twilight walk by the kirkyard, and holding chat with the bright-eyed, comely young mason, whose trowel was employed in plastering up the kirkyard wall; and so twilight after twilight brought these meetings, till the trowel was laid aside, and the young mason paused to chat, or gather the wild roses that overran the wall, and finally to imprison her white fingers in his—and, later, his working-day clothes laid aside, for a neat suit of grey and the picturesque tartan plaid over his shoulders, which well became his manly figure, they two walked far and late under the summer moon, through the romantic environs of Inverness, and the beautiful young girl, listening to the words of love which escaped his lips far oftener than the creed of schools, or geological lore, surrendered her heart into his keeping and became his betrothed.

Thus and there Hugh Miller met the good angel of his life: at Inverness they were married.

Years had gone by, and wealth and fame had come to the mason geologist. The world—and most of all, his own Scotland—had acknowledged his genius.

Men of science took this man, unlearned in the creed of the schools, but rich in the lore of nature, and pronounced him their more than peer, their king: for his daring mind and active resources had opened a new path wherein they might follow and gather crumbs of wisdom.

But not at first, or speedily, had the reward of his labours come.

There were days devoted to other pursuits which must earn the livelihood of his family, ere the long evening came which he reserved to pass in the more congenial studies that claimed his interest; and at this early period, his faithful and true-hearted wife, joining heart and hand with her husband's interests, taught the boys and girls of Cromarty to read and spell, while Hugh Miller toiled at a small salary in the Cromarty Bank.

Thus, from their earnings, the couple eked out a frugal support; and when children sprang up about them, the young father supplied the increased expenditure of his household by writing for the magazines, upon his favourite geological science.

But brighter days followed; and, as I have said, Hugh Miller became rich and famous. He wrote much and well upon every topic—essays, lectures, scientific truths, and books issued from his pen in startling succession; and then came those two great works which won him universal fame, and placed him foremost in the ranks of known geologists—"The Old Red Sandstone" and "Footprints of the Creator." Of these we need not speak. They are found in every library in the land—standard works, written in concise, forcible, vigorous style; and treating of that from whose bosom we all sprung, and where we must all sleep at last—our mother earth, with her wonderful belongings—rock, fossil, and petrification—tracing, in very truth, through all, the "footsteps of the Creator."

But at length, in the prime of his years, the vigour of his manhood, when it seemed as though he should have sat down "under his own vine and fig tree," to enjoy the fruit of his labours, there came a dark phase in the life of Hugh Miller.

His bodily vigour gave way; his mind reeled under the strain of too intense mental labour; and when his last work, "The Testimony of Rocks," was finished, Hugh Miller lay on a sick bed from which he rose a nervous, morbid, gloomy man. Then followed months of intense suffering. The over-taxed brain was pierced with sharp pains, and refused to act or think; his excited imagination conjured terrible visions before his eyes; shadowy forms crouched, ready to spring upon him when he went into the darkness; a haunting fear of robbers, housebreakers, murderers, led him to convert his own study, even his bed-chamber, into a perfect armoury, where hung weapons of every description, to put into instant requisition against the dreaded foe.

Alas, that the noble brain was fast reeling into madness; for, so surely as he had over-taxed himself, so surely must reaction come! Shall it not serve as a warning to you, oh, scholar, bending over your books by the midnight lamp—to you, oh, pale author, writing your heart's blood into your glowing creations—to you, oh, proud, brave, earnest man of science, distilling the very juices of your brain into truths for the world of letters—when, in future, you read how Hugh Miller, the mason geologist at this nineteenth century, died?

There was a cheerful family gathering about the supper-table in Hugh Miller's pleasant parlour. For weeks "father" had not been so well or cheerful; for he smiled and chatted with the children as he sipped his tea, and when the happy wife removed the tea-tray, and the household circle gathered about the fireside, he "told stories"—old legends of castles, loch and glen, when brave Robert Bruce led gallant Scotsmen to the fray, and Sir William Wallace's name rang like a bugle call through Scotland's hills.

Then he took the youngest on his knee, and stroked his flaxen hair—even as his own father, many and many a year before, had stroked his own curls in the Cromarty cottage by the seaside—then read aloud several humorous pieces, ere he sent the children from him and retired, tranquil and calm, to his own room.

"Mamma, isn't papa going to get well? I hope so, mamma, because I like to hear him read to us the funny stories he read to-night!" said the smallest prattler, as the mother lifted him softly into his cot.

"Perhaps so. It will be a blessed thing for papa to be wholly well once more, darling!" said the mother, with a happy light in her eyes, as she kissed the child and left it to its slumbers.

Alas for the hopeful woman!—for when morning came, shrieks, and sobs, and cries of terror echoed from the room Hugh Miller had last night entered—a room his footsteps might never more pass, save as he lay straight and still in his shroud.

For, in the midnight hour, madness, long dreaded, and kept at bay, had indeed settled down upon his brain. And in the midnight had he risen from his bed, penned a few wild words, touching and pitiful to tears in their very incoherency, then taken the fatal revolver from the wall, and pointed it to a heart than which a nobler never beat in human bosom.

Those few significant words, penned to the wife of his youthful love: "Dearest Lydia—my brain—it burns—it burns!" told what agony of suffering was and driving Reason from its throne, tempted poor Hugh Miller to the suicide's fate!

But who shall say but, in that terrible midnight hour, the superstition of his boyhood did not return to him? Who shall say, but the wraith of his father's ghost, and the dreaded livid hand which had waved and beckoned him once from out the wild Cromarty sea-waves, did not then beckon him into the world of silence and mystery—even the silent land of death?

No man knows how, in that awful midnight, Hugh Miller, the Scotch geologist, died!

M. W. J.

LOED BROUGHAM has taken his seat in the House of Lords, and addressed their Lordships and voted with the Government on the subject of corrupt practices at elections. His fine, massive, venerable head is still almost covered with a profusion of white hair. The old man's features are more strongly marked and more characteristic than ever, and his deeply-bronzed complexion testifies to much out-door exercise in a sea-wind and hot sun. He walks slowly, and with evident feebleness and difficulty, and his frame is now much bowed and bent by the weight of years (eighty-eight) and infirmities. Yet something of the "old man eloquent" inveighed against corrupt practices, and called for more stringent proceedings both against the briber and the bribed. Lord Brougham was affectionately greeted by the Peers who enjoy his friendship—and by none more heartily than the Bishop of Oxford—on being again spared to take his seat in the House.

THE WINTER IN VENICE.

It was winter, as I said, when I first came to Venice, and my experiences of the city were not all purely æsthetic. There was, indeed, an every-day roughness and discomfort in the weather, which those who have never passed a winter in Italy find it hard, on experiment, to reconcile with habitual ideas of the season's clemency in the south. But winter is apt to be very severe in mild climates. People do not acknowledge it, making a wretched pretence that it is summer, only a little out of humour. The Germans have introduced stoves at Venice, but they are not in much favour with the Italians, who think their heat unwholesome, and endure a degree of cold, in their wish to dispense with fire, which we of the winter-lands know nothing of in our houses.

They pay for their absurd prejudice with terrible chilblains; and their hands, which suffer equally with their feet, are, in the case of those most exposed to the cold, objects pitiable and revolting to behold, when the itching and the effort to allay it has turned them into bloated masses of sores. It is not a pleasant thing to speak of, and the constant sight of it among people who bring you bread, cut you cheese, and weigh you out sugar, by no means inures the northern stomach to its prevalence. I have noticed that priests, and those who have much to do in the frigid churches, are the worst sufferers in this way; and I think no one can help noting in the harsh, raw winter-complexion (for in summer the tone is quite different) of the women of all classes, the protest of systems cruelly starved of the warmth which health demands.

The houses are, naturally enough, in this climate, where there are eight months of summer in the year, all built with a view to coolness in summer; and the rooms, which are not upon the ground-floor, are very large, lofty, and cold. In the palaces, indeed, there are two suites of apartments—the smaller and cosier suite upon the first-floor for the winter, and the grand and airier chambers and saloons above, for defence against the insidious heats of the *strococo*. But, for the most part, people must occupy the same room summer and winter, the sole change being in the strip of carpet laid meagrely before the sofa during the latter season. In the comparatively few houses where carpeted rooms are the rule, and not the exception, they are always stripped of their carpets in the spring—for the triple purpose of sparing the carpets, evicting fleas and other domestic insects, and showing off the beauty of the oiled and shining pavement, which in the meanest houses is tasteful, and in many of the better sort is often wrought with figures and designs of Mosaic work.

All the floors in Venice are of stone, and whether of marble flags, or of that species of composition formed of dark cement, with fragments of coloured marble imbedded, and smoothed and polished to the most glassy and even surface, and the general effect and complexion of petrified plum-pudding, all the floors in Venice are death-cold in winter. People sit with their feet upon cushions, and their bodies muffled in furs and wadded gowns. When one goes out into the sun, one often finds an overcoat too heavy, but it never gives warmth enough in the house, where the Venetian sometimes wears it. Indeed, the sun is recognized by Venetians as the only legitimate source of heat, and they sell his favour at fabulous prices to such foreigners as take the lodgings into which he shines. It is those who remain in-doors, therefore, who are exposed to the utmost rigour of the Venetian winter, and people spend as much of their time as possible in the open air.

The Riva dei Schiavoni catches the warm afternoon sun in its whole extent, and is then thronged with promenaders of every class, condition, age, and sex; and whenever the sun shines in the Piazza, shivering fashion eagerly courts its favour. At night men crowd the close little *caffè*, where they reciprocate smoke, respiration, and animal heat, and thus temper

the inclemency of the weather, and beguile the time with solemn loafing, and the perusal of dingy little journals, drinking small cups of black coffee, and playing long games of chess—an evening that seemed to me as torpid and lifeless as a Lap's, and intolerable when I remembered the bright, social winter evenings of another and happier land and civilization.—*Venetian Life.* By Wm. D. Howells.

AN ECCENTRIC WOMAN.

Mrs. FLOYD, who had accompanied her husband to India, by her eccentricities, tormented the general, a man as precise and formal as she was wild and impulsive. Many curious scenes were the result of this contrast, when the grave martinet was made the victim of her practical jokes. On one occasion she stood near him, with her baby in the nurse's arms, when, after an inspection, the troops were marching past. Shrieking as if the child was threatened with some unseen danger, she threw it on her husband's saddle, and running away with the nurse, who was privy to her purpose, left the general with a squeaking baby in his arms before all the troops.

At another time, Mrs. Floyd had a woman, dressed for the occasion, placed in a palanquin, and carried to the general's tent. On arriving there she raised a great outcry, and seemed in intense agony, caused, as she said, by the attack of a tiger, from whose fangs she had been miraculously rescued, on a mount rising on the plains some distance off. The general was at that moment giving orders to his officers; but moved by the woman's cries, and excited by the prospect of a successful hunt, all were eager for immediate action, and business was for the time forgotten. They proceeded forthwith with some Sepoys to the spot, and in a short time saw an enormous tiger crouched behind some shrubs, half-way up the rock.

The general ordered a volley to be fired at him, while some venturesome youth clambered up the side of the mount, to take a more active part in the capture of the prize. The volley was fired, but the tiger remained immovable. Another volley was now directed at him by the Sepoys, and still he continued motionless, as if regardless of such unskilful assailants. At length, those who had advanced up the rock approached nearer and nearer, when one of them giving the animal a blow with the butt end of his gun, it rolled down the precipitous rock, and fell at the feet of its astonished pursuers below—a stuffed skin!

General Floyd went back to his tent, without an observation, and no one in his presence ever alluded to the morning's adventure. Mrs. Floyd insisted against all precedent on giving a newly-born daughter two godfathers, who were to be Colonel Wellesley and Colonel Cotton, and on having the child named Flavia. Both officers officiated accordingly at a grand christening, which was followed by an evening party.

When most of the guests had departed, Mrs. Floyd requested the two colonels to oblige the clergyman to christen the child again, as she declared he had not crossed its forehead properly in the morning. It was in vain that they expressed themselves quite satisfied with the ceremony, and urged the impropriety of having it repeated. The lady became so nervous and irritable, that to appease her the chaplain, however, crossed the child's forehead, without repeating any part of the baptismal service. Mrs. Floyd was the mother of the beautiful Lady Peel and Lady Fuller.—*Memoirs and Correspondence of Field-Marshal Viscount Combermere, G.C.B. &c.* By the Right Hon. Mary, Viscountess Combermere, and Capt. W. W. Knollys, 93rd Sutherland Highlanders.

WE are glad to learn that his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge has made a rule under which the proceeds of the commissions of officers selling out while under age are to be handed over to their parents and guardians, and not to themselves. The regulation will have a good effect in checking the evil inflicted on youths in the army by money-lenders and other social pests of a similar description.

THE TOADSTONE.—Many old writers refer to this stone. Albertus Magnus, who wrote about 1275, seems to be a reliable authority. He was very fond of the natural philosophy of his day, and was the tutor of St. Thomas Aquinas. He mentions toadstone having the figure of the toad upon it, when taken out of the toad's head. Others have doubted this fact, and suggested that the figure might be artificially produced. Fenton, writing in 1563, says: "There is to be found in the heads of old and great toads, a stone they call borax or stelon, used as rings, which gives forewarning against venom." Lupton refers to it as an antidote to the poison of venomous stings. Lyly refers to it in his *Euphues*; Ben Jonson in *The Poet*, scene 3rd, does so also. Yet all that we can tell of mediæval lore will scarcely be conclusive to the present scientific world, without actual modern experiment upon an "old and great toad." This would not be so useless

as many scientific experiments are; for it is quite possible that this borax, or stelon, or crepandina (load-stone), may be allied to the famous bezoar or snake-stone.

A VERY COURTEOUS WIDOW.—Some hundred years later we find a Sir John Salisbury of Llewenny-hall marrying a ward of Queen Elizabeth's, Katherine of Berayne, then only fourteen years old. She was an heiress, and a descendant in the fifth generation from Owen Tudor and the Princess Katherine of France. On Sir John's death, in 1567, his widow followed him to the grave, and in going to church was escorted by Sir Richard Clough, the owner of property in the neighbourhood, formerly in the service of Sir Thomas Gresham, and at that time a very eminent merchant. In returning home after the burial, she was attended by a young gentleman of property, named Morris Wynn. He, perceiving the widow to be not very inconsolable, and fired by her charms, profited by the opportunity to whisper a tale of love into her ears, and finally asked her to be his wife. She, by no means startled at this oddly timed proposal, civilly declined his offer, saying that she accepted a similar one from Clough on her way to church; but, probably observing young Wynn to be much cast down at her refusal, and being a large-hearted, compassionate woman, she sought to console the rejected lover by the assurance that if she survived Clough, Wynn should be her third husband. This promise she duly kept, when three years later she was a second time left a widow. Again, a third time, did she outlive her husband, and a fourth time became a wife, marrying a Mr. Edward Thelwall, also a Denbighshire man. This husband survived her. So numerous and influential were the descendants of this Katherine of Berayne, that she was long known by the title of *Mam Cymry*, or *Mother of Wales*.—*Memoirs and Correspondence of Field-Marshal Viscount Combermere, G.C.B., &c.* By the Right Hon. Mary Viscountess Combermere, and Capt. W. W. Knollys, 93rd Sutherland Highlanders.

THIRSTANE.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHEN Leonard perceived Rachel looking at him, he advanced hastily, and took her hand with the respect which always marked his slightest word or action in her presence.

"You are ill—suffering," he said, anxiously scanning her pale face; "what has happened?"

"Nothing," she answered, in an absent way; "nothing ever does happen."

"Have you been at work?" he asked, looking towards the studio, where she frequently received her friends.

"You must not go there," Rachel said, quickly remembering the torn canvases; "no one is to go there any more."

"Either I am fanciful to-day, or you have sunk your voice to a peculiarly mournful key; I am sure you are not well."

"Never mind," she replied, in the same dreary tone, "when is it ever well with any one?"

He spoke again, but Rachel made no answer; she could not turn her thoughts from the painful scene of the last hour, which started up like a degradation before her.

"Mrs. Ward!" Leonard exclaimed, in alarm. "Something serious has occurred to trouble you. I felt it when I came into the room—only tell me what it is?"

When Rachel remembered what she had to do—she was to separate herself from him and the few friends who had striven for awhile to make her life pleasant—she could collect her thoughts sufficiently to shew any courtesy, but said, abruptly:

"I forgot; I cannot invite you to visit me any more."

A flush shot up to Leonard's forehead, and his brow contracted with a haughty frown.

"I do not understand," he returned.

"I know, I know," she interrupted. "Do not speak to me in that tone, do not question me; but you must not come here again."

"Have I had the misfortune to offend? Of another person I should not ask the question."

"Nor must you of me! Do not interrupt me, nor look at me with that angry frown. Before you go I have something to say to you. It may be very long before we meet again; possibly I shall go away from here—"

"Where?" he asked, eagerly.

"Can I tell!" she exclaimed, passionately, then checked the rising tempest. "At all events, I am to have nothing more like the pleasure of the last few months. I want you to remember all that you promised me, to persevere in the course you have marked out for yourself—"

"I cannot understand! What does this mean?"

"I have no time and no power to explain—I can only bid you farewell."

"This shall not be!" he exclaimed, vehemently; "it is not of your own free will that you do this thing."

He looked appealingly at her to assure him that it was so, but she listened in passive silence.

"Will you not tell me?" he urged. "Only say that you are doing this yourself, and I will trouble you no longer with my presence—is it so?"

Rachel strove to speak; her lips moved, but could not articulate. Leonard was watching her every movement.

"You cannot answer—you will not tell me it is you!"

A joy so wild, so intense, lit up his face, that Rachel was roused from the lethargy which had stolen over her senses.

"It is not you!"

"It is I," she said, brokenly. "You hear me—go!"

Without a word he moved towards the door. Rachel's head sank upon her bosom, her eyes closed and her heart almost ceased to beat.

Upon the threshold Thirstane turned, looked back; when he saw that white face and motionless form he sprang again to her side, crying hoarsely:

"No, madam, no! I will not leave you; I will not stir from this spot until you have told me everything."

"Everything?" she opened her eyes, and looked at him as she might have gazed at some distant object. "It has been told—everything is settled now—everything."

She was thinking of her life—of the bald, cold future, that spread out like a map before her gaze.

"You are not listening to me! Do not look so strangely—oh, I know that something terrible has happened."

He seized her hands and pressed them to his lips, murmuring broken words which she could not catch. Rachel drew the cold fingers from his grasp, and motioned him to go.

"I cannot!" he exclaimed; "heaven help me, I cannot! I have only begun to live since I knew you; my life before was a floating dream, but now there is something fixed and tangible, at which I can grasp, and feel that I am not entirely alone."

Rachel listened in silence; his words sounded like the expression of her own feelings; she could have believed almost that a voice in her own soul was uttering those passionate revelations.

"You have made me a better man—heaven bless you for that!"

"Have I indeed done you good?" she said, with her absent look.

"Good! I have no words to tell you what these past months have been to me—"

"And there will be no faltering now," she murmured; "no looking back!"

"But I shall be alone," he said, sorrowfully; "you will have vanished from my sight for ever."

The word fell upon her heart like a blow!

"For ever!" she repeated, mechanically; "for ever!"

Thirstane grew paler than before; a dangerous light shot into his eyes, which would have startled her had she understood its language.

He knew whose will was parting them, and the thought of leaving her in that man's power completely maddened him.

For the time the respectful attachment of the past months became a mad passion, which deprived him of all thought or discretion.

Words, passionate and frenzied, rose to his lips—he stooped as if he would have caught her to his heart—then drew back.

He could not insult her helplessness, her innocence. She comprehended so little his feelings—a single expression would have startled him for ever, and if they must part, at least she should respect his memory.

He drew back, and paced up and down the room for several moments in silence.

At length he returned and stood beside her—his whole face had changed.

Had he been her brother there was not a thought stirring in his breast for which he need have blushed.

"I do not know how to advise you," he said, "and yet I cannot bear to leave you so helpless. I understand what has been done; it is not myself alone you are debarrd from seeing, but you are to be separated from all your friends, and to such tyranny I do not believe that you ought to submit."

"It does not matter; it makes no difference what happens—I shall die the sooner."

"Oh, heaven! And you ask me to leave you to a fate like this!"

For the first time, some tangible perception of the truth startled the woman. She rose grand from

the unutterable despair which surged and broke over her pallid face.

"Yes," she said; "go now—go."

"But it is only for a time—"

"It is for ever!"

There was no other word spoken; Thirstane pressed those white hands once more to his lips, turned to leave the room, and saw Mr. Ward standing in the doorway.

Leonard walked directly towards him, and Rachel sat in dumb silence, conscious that some great crisis had arrived, yet with neither force nor energy to meet it.

"Don't allow my entrance to interrupt your leave-taking," sneered Mr. Ward.

"They were over, sir," replied Thirstane, with flashing eyes.

"I am glad to hear it; there will be no necessity for repeating them in my house."

Leonard made a step forward; his clenched hands worked as if he would have caught at the speaker's throat, but he remembered Rachel, and checked that powerful impulse.

"For such insolence I have no answer to make in a lady's presence."

"Indeed! I should judge your acquaintance with that lady was sufficient to warrant you in almost any liberty of speech."

"For shame, sir!" returned Thirstane. "A man would have died rather than have been guilty of uttering those words."

"I do not require any instruction from you; I address my own wife as I think proper."

"And prove yourself a coward by so doing," whispered Leonard.

Every malignant feeling in Mr. Ward's nature flamed up. He ground his thin lips between his teeth, and his eyes had a dark, wavering rim around them, very unlike their usual expressionless calm.

"Do you know what I am about to do? You have defied me—take the consequences! I will have a divorce."

"You are either a madman or a villain," said Thirstane, "and I think the latter; but at least you need not so degrade yourself; there are other ways—"

"Thank you! I am a moral man and a Christian, and would not be guilty of the sin of duelling."

Rachel had sat motionless during the conversation between her husband and Thirstane, but now she rose and advanced towards them.

"Enough," she said, abruptly; "go away, if you please, Mr. Thirstane."

She was deadly pale, but perfectly calm; she looked like a person walking in her sleep, and when her eyes glanced towards them they seemed gazing far beyond.

"Farewell," said Leonard; "what that insane man means I cannot pretend to say, but if at any time I can prove the respect and esteem I have for you, pray allow me to do so."

Rachel looked at him with that unchanging stare, and, with a fierce glance towards Mr. Ward, Thirstane left the room.

Rachel stood in the same attitude, gazing directly before her, yet seeing nothing. Her very stillness angered Mr. Ward, and he exclaimed—

"This house is no longer a home for you, madam: you and I shall be best apart."

"I do not understand you," she said.

"I mean that you are no longer my wife—I will be separated from you."

"If there be any way," she moaned; "but we are husband and wife."

"And there is a law of divorce, madam."

"A divorce!" she shook her head sadly, yet with the same appearance of having no real comprehension of the scene; "what a terrible mockery of God's laws."

"No cant, if you please; I am not in a mood to listen! Do what you choose, go where you like, but we two must part."

She roused herself to listen.

"And he too feels it," she murmured, "the loneliness, the loneliness!"

"I feel that you have neglected your duties as a wife, that you are a vain, frivolous creature, whose conduct has been highly culpable."

"What have I done?"

"Wasn't that man kissing your hand when I came in—looking at you in that abominable way he has?"

"I do not know," she replied; and, in truth she was totally unconscious of all that had passed.

"Do you think me an idiot—a blind fool? But I do not choose to discuss the subject! You can leave my house when you like, and I can assure you I shall consider your presence no loss."

"Mr. Ward," said Rachel, steadily, "I have hardly understood what has passed, but I feel that you are about to do something to injure me—you have no right to do this."

"No right! no right! I have a right to claim satisfaction, and I will."

"For what?"

"Your conduct has been improper—people have talked of you. My wife must be above suspicion."

"You are mad!" exclaimed Rachel; "a false, bad man! Yes, let me go away—the farther the better—let me go."

"No one hinders you, madam; you are at liberty to go as soon and as far as you see fit."

"At once! Do what you will, only let me be at peace."

"I desire it as much as you can; you have made my life a torment during the past twelve months."

Rachel remembered that a year ago, that very day, she had sat in her quiet room, in the old home, and promised to become that man's wife; but she did not speak of it, though she kept repeating the words with a dim perception there was something painful in the sound.

"I shall write to your aunt," said Mr. Ward; "she is a sensible woman, though she brought you up badly. I shall tell her of your conduct; we shall see what she will think."

"Be careful what you do; you shall not turn Aunt Margaret against me."

"I shall tell her to come and take you away. I do not choose you to start off by yourself; nobody knows where you would go. You shall stay here until she comes."

He left the room, and Rachel was alone once more. She tried to think, but that was useless! The dizzy whirl which had been in her brain for days before her terrible illness of the previous year returned, and left her powerless to collect her thoughts.

Only one reflection started up prominent in her mind—she must go away, whither, it mattered not, only to be gone.

While she sat there, helpless and confused, the door opened, and Alice Freeman crept into the room. When she saw Rachel's despairing face she sprang forward with a cry, and fell upon her knees before her.

"Forgive me," she exclaimed; "oh forgive me! I have helped to bring this trouble upon you, but I did not mean it; indeed I did not."

Rachel looked at her with the same vacant expression, patting gently the hand which held her dress, from a vague idea that some sorrow had fallen upon the girl, and she had come to her for comfort.

"Poor little Alice," she murmured; "poor child!"

"Mrs. Ward—Rachel! Don't look so, you frighten me. I have come to beg your pardon. I am so, so sorry. I had come to see you. I met Leonard, and then Mr. Ward, and have heard all that has happened. I am afraid I am to blame. The other day I spoke passionately about you and Leonard to your husband; then that horrid old woman he praises so much found out that I was annoyed; it made your husband the more violent."

"I can't understand," said Rachel. "You were angry—you talked about me?"

"I was jealous—don't you know!" She hid her face and wept piteously. "It is shame enough to acknowledge it, but it is true!"

"Jealous?" repeated Rachel; "jealous?"

"It was mean, base, but I could not help it! Since Leonard knew you he has cared nothing for me! I know it is unwomanly to say this, but I must give you some excuse for my conduct."

Rachel pushed her away, and looked in her face that was crimson with shame.

"You love him?" she asked; "speak—do you?"

"I can't tell when I learned to!" she sobbed; "but it is long since he had any affection for me—oh, Mrs. Ward, I am very wretched!"

Rachel could not comprehend the thoughts which rushed over her; she could have smitten the suppliant to the ground; then came a revulsion of feeling—she seemed to have been guilty of some great wrong, yet how, she could not tell. All the while that unhappy girl was sobbing at her feet, and praying to be forgiven.

"You should have told me how you felt before," said Rachel. "Go home, poor child, I shall trouble you no more."

"And you are not angry?"

"No, no!" she replied, with unaccountable impatience. "I cannot talk now, but I am not angry. I dare say I have been wrong—I am sorry."

"Do not speak so!" sobbed Alice. "I cannot hear you blame yourself—it makes me more wretched than ever."

"I will cause you no unhappiness," murmured Rachel; "indeed I will not."

"Let me do something for you—surely you are sick."

"No, no; I am well. Be at rest; but go—only go."

"You ought not to be alone."

"I must—I will! Leave me, do leave me!"

There was a passion in her entreaty which Alice could not resist; she left her without another word. When she reached home she found that her uncle had arrived. He held a long conversation with Mrs.

Mason, then came out and bade his niece prepare for a journey, and, before she had time to collect her thoughts, after the excitement of the morning, they were on their way.

Rachel must have sat for hours when Alice left her. Then the single thought came back—she must leave that place! She dragged herself to her room, exchanged her dress for one more befitting a journey, and mechanically made preparations for her departure. When all was ready she went down stairs in the same dreary way, and passed out of the house.

The chain was broken—the galling fetters of her past life were at length thrown off.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ALL that night Rachel was borne swiftly on, with the shrieking of the steam whistle in her ear, and the constant rumbling of the railway carriages increasing the oppression upon her brain.

She did not reflect, was unconscious of suffering, and only sat there in a blind apathy. It was the afternoon of the next day before she reached the terminus of the "line."

It was sunset when she arrived at her old home. Nothing had changed; the same quiet reigned about; the river flowed on beneath the mountain shadows, tranquil as of yore, and Rachel might almost have believed the past year a dream, had not the pain at her heart borne witness of its reality.

She had returned! Heart-broken and despairing, she had brought her wretched life back to the old dwelling, to find in its seclusion the peace and safety which the world denied.

When the carriage arrived at the gate she descended and walked towards the house. The dog, aroused by her approach, rushed out from the kitchen, and barked angrily as though she had been a stranger.

That incident, slight as it was, sent a new pang to Rachel's heart—in all the world she was wholly alone! Through the window she could see Aunt Margaret knitting in her accustomed seat, the fire burning low, and casting a dim light through the apartment, which only increased its gloom.

Rachel paused, with her hand upon the latch, feeling almost that it would be better even then, to turn back and seek refuge elsewhere.

She could hope for neither rest nor sympathy—nothing in life could give them now. She opened the door softly and went in; before the woman by the fire could speak she was standing by her side.

"Aunt Margaret," she said, in a hollow voice, "I have come back to you—will you let me stay here?"

Margaret Holmes regarded her in silence; there was something in the girl's face which showed how terrible was the evil that had befallen her.

For an instant, the stern features softened; then some bitter memory rushed across her, and the tenderness faded, leaving her countenance harder than before.

"Did you hear me?" Rachel said, impatiently; "I have come back—are you sorry to see me, Aunt Margaret?"

"I did not expect you," she replied. "Have you come alone?"

"Entirely alone," she said, shaking with fatigue and the chill which that question sent through her frame.

"How pale you are," Margaret said, rising. "Sit down here and warm yourself—you must be tired."

"So tired; oh so tired!"

Her eyes closed, and she leaned back in the chair which Margaret had placed for her.

"Where is your husband?" her aunt asked suddenly.

Rachel opened her eyes at the name, growing colder than before.

"I came alone," she repeated.

"So you told me; but Mr. Ward, where is he?"

"I don't know—at his house, perhaps! Can't you understand, Aunt Margaret?"

"You have not left him? You do not mean that you are never going back?"

"Never!" she exclaimed, with something of her old passionate spirit; "I will never go back, Aunt Margaret, never!"

"What do you mean? Why did you come—what reason had you for leaving him?"

"He sent me away—I had nowhere in the world to go but here, and so I came."

Margaret retreated from her in horror, putting out her hand as if fearing her touch.

"Sent you away?" she said. "What is this, Rachel?"

What had you done? Is it disgrace—more disgrace?"

Rachel lifted her head proudly; those harsh words restored her to herself.

"I have brought no shame upon you, Aunt Margaret; I have done nothing which should make me fear to come back to the house that was my father's home."

"Your father!" she exclaimed; "your father! Girl,

oh, I see it all! That face—those eyes—I might have known! Rachel, answer me; tell me what has brought you here?"

Rachel had relapsed into her former abstraction; she sat gazing vacantly into the fire, and it was not until Margaret had repeated the question that she answered:

"I told you I had nowhere else to go, and I came here."

"Here!" muttered the woman. "Will there never be an end? Has there not been enough of suffering and shame—will it never end, never?"

"I tell you that no shame comes here with me; I would not have brought it to this spot."

Margaret did not speak; she had seated herself at a little distance, and her face wore a troubled look.

"Don't sit there so cold and silent!" exclaimed Rachel. "Won't you speak to me—have you nothing to say?"

"What can I say? You are here—are you not satisfied now? Advice you never would listen to!"

"It is too late, Aunt Margaret; everything is ended now."

"No, it is not, and it will never end! You are young yet—think of the years of suffering and suspicion which lie before you! Go back to your husband—there is time yet."

"I will not—I will never do that! I can beg, die, but I will never return to that man! He sent me away from his house as if I had been his servant, and if he were to come here upon his knees, and pray of me to return, I would not."

"But why? You must have done something very wrong, for Mr. Ward was not an unjust man."

"He is a tyrant, Aunt Margaret; a mean, narrow-minded hypocrite! I don't wish to talk of him! Harsh words can do no good now—don't speak of him again."

"But you say nothing of your own conduct; you do not tell me what reason he had for treating you so."

"Do you dare suspect me? Will you be the first to turn against me?"

"I will know the truth; then I shall be the judge of my own actions. Did you quarrel with him—were you wilful and ungovernable?"

"I never disputed his commands, never once! He told me to go to church, and I went; to give up painting, and I did. Then he forbade me to receive my friends, those whom I really liked. He came into the room just as I was telling one of them what had happened—"

"Was it a man?"

"Yes: Mr. Ward said many insulting things, but I did not listen. After the gentleman went away I can hardly tell what took place. I know he threw me in a chair and ordered me to leave his house—I did it."

"And this man; what had he said to you?"

"He had been good and kind as a brother."

"Don't tell me any more, Rachel; I won't hear it! You may not have meant any wrong, but go back to your husband! Humble yourself, plead with him, do anything rather than accept the life before you."

"It cannot be worse than all I have heretofore endured; there can be no torture like that, and I will never take up the yoke again."

"Do you know what the world will say—how suspicion will follow you everywhere, no matter how far off you may hide yourself?"

"What is the world to me, Aunt Margaret? Would it help me to bear up under my fate—then why should I heed its falsehoods?"

"This has been taught you!" exclaimed Margaret, clutching her arm fiercely; "this is that man's work; don't deny it, Rachel."

"It is not! He never spoke of those things—never alluded to my life."

"There is no safety for you away from your husband; you must go back to him. You did not dream it—there I can trust you; but this man loved you."

Rachel looked at her for a moment—acts and words, never before understood, came back, and a wild, frightened joy came over her face.

"Heaven help me," she moaned; "I never knew it."

"And if you had—"

"This was what Mr. Ward meant," she continued, with renewed passion, "and he dared to think ill of me! Oh, he is meaner and more pitiful than I had dreamed—I am glad he sent me away! I can bear anything now—Aunt Margaret, I am glad!"

"You shall go back, I say; I will not rest till I have seen you in your husband's home again."

"Would you do this, Aunt Margaret? Think if it were yourself! Would you go back to a man who had once driven you from his roof?"

"It is hard, girl, hard; but it is woman's destiny—accept it! Be warned, I say; terrible as the fate may be, it is better than the one which awaits you if you do not return. You don't know what the world is,



[RACHEL LEAVING MARGARET'S HOUSE.]

Rachel; you are very young yet, and have not felt what it is to be slandered and calumniated; to have your tenderest feelings laid bare to the envious and malignant—think of it."

"Still I say I will never go back! I have done no wrong; no blame can attach itself to me."

"A woman is always blamed, Rachel; always believed guilty! Think, too, of the life before you if you remain here! I shall soon be an old woman, and cannot last long; when I am gone you will be left entirely alone—what will you do then? You could not live on here as I have done, watching yourself grow old; the pain at your heart wearing deeper in till it left nothing but cold ashes where youth once beat—you could not do this, Rachel."

"I will never go back, Aunt Margaret," she answered, in the same tone, though her head sank upon her bosom and her hands fell slowly to her side, as the picture which the woman drew rose before her fancy in all its desolation. "I could bear anything rather than that! No, no; that man and I cannot breathe the same air again—let him go his own way. I ask only to be left in peace."

"You are mad!" exclaimed Margaret, with startling vehemence; "wholly mad; but I will not sit by and see you rush to destruction."

"Nothing can save me now," murmured Rachel; "nothing! I have lost everything; I need have no fear! My hopes are gone—my youth is passing from me before I knew its worth—I am alone, entirely alone."

"Go to bed now; you will be more rational in the morning, and then I will go back with you."

"I tell you I will not return, Aunt Margaret! Did you ever know me falter? I shall not now."

"It is your duty—"

"Do not use that word; I will not hear it! You would do as I have done, Aunt Margaret; you are cold and unforgiving; you would not endure as I did."

The woman drew back with a shudder: the words upon her lips were checked by a groan, and for a moment she sat silent beneath the goading memories that forbade her to continue.

"I may be cold and hard," she said, at last, "but it is not for you to judge me; I did by you the best I could; how much I have endured for your sake you will never know; but it matters not. You have said that I was unforgiving; if you refuse to perform your duty, you will find me so! Either consent to go back to your husband or never see my face again."

"Are these your last words, Aunt Margaret?"

"The last; and I shall not change! I have not hesitated in harder struggles than this, and it is the final one. Your answer, Rachel!"

The girl rose slowly and gathered the shawl about her.

She did not tremble now; her face was cold and white; her large eyes seemed looking into the lonely future to which she was going forth.

"Your answer!" repeated the woman.

Without a word, Rachel turned, and before her aunt could speak again, had left the house. A drifting snow-storm had come up, and the wind swept drearily through the pine trees on the hill.

Rachel hurried down the path, and stood in the broad road without a fixed thought in her soul; only a strange vacancy, like the future, whatever she gazed.

She fled up the road, the snow blinding her sight, and the blast driving her on with its resistless sweep. Once or twice she moaned faintly, but still hurried on. The last asylum had been refused her—there was no home left now.

Margaret sat for a time awaiting her return, but she came not. The woman hastened to the door and called aloud—

"Rachel! Rachel!"

Only the wind among the pine trees answered, mocking the wild entreaty in her voice. Margaret tottered back towards the fire.

"I did all I could to save her," she muttered; "she is gone like the rest!"

Her form wavered to and fro like a statue smitten at the base; then she fell heavily forward, with her face hidden in her garments, and lay helpless upon the floor.

For a long hour Margaret Holmes lay powerless where she had fallen in that last struggle. She was not insensible, but her limbs seemed turned to stone, and she strove in vain to rise. After a time she began to understand the calamity that had come upon her, and remained motionless in passive despair.

At length, Ophelia Hill entered the room, bearing a light in her hand; at the sight of that prostrate form she started back with a cry of despair.

"Miss Holmes!" she screamed. "Gracious goodness, you ain't dead, be you? Do say you ain't, for mercy's sake!"

"Try and help me up," Margaret said, speaking thickly, and with pain. "You will have to go for help, Ophelia—I shall never move again."

"What on airth ails you?" ejaculated the frightened damsel. "Don't scare a body to death!"

"I have had a paralytic stroke—don't scream; it

won't help me! Try and pull me along to the settee, and then go down for the doctor."

Ophelia's strong sense came back, and without another word of fright or lamentation went about her work. Margaret lay like a statue in her hold, only able to move her arms and speak with difficulty.

"I thought all them journeys wouldn't end in no good," muttered Ophelia, as she placed the helpless woman upon the settee. "Only got home yesterday from nobody knows where, and a good deal wilder than a hawk."

Margaret made no reply; the girl's words carried her thoughts back to the events of the past days, and mental agony wrung a pang from her which no bodily suffering could have done.

But she motioned Ophelia away when she would have helped her, and smothered her torture again.

"Why, here's a handkerchief with Rachel's name on it!" exclaimed Ophelia, picking it up; "and a scarf and a pair of gloves—what does it all mean?"

"Go for the doctor, and ask Henry Davis to send down to the tavern and see if any lady is there."

"But I can't leave you alone—"

"Do as I bid you!" interrupted Margaret, with all her former energy; "I am not out of my senses, and will be obeyed still."

"She'll drive me out o' mine," muttered Ophelia; "but I'll have to go."

She put on her bonnet and shawl and hurried away, leaving Margaret powerless upon the couch, listening to the pitiless storm without, and hearing human means in every gust.

She lay there striving to pronounce a name, but she had no strength.

After a time her mind began to wander, and she muttered, indistinctly, of events long past, calling upon those who had borne a part in her eventful life.

When Ophelia returned with the doctor and one or two frightened neighbours, Margaret had sunk into a stupor, from which they could not rouse her.

The physician pronounced her incurable; a few hours might terminate her existence, or she might linger on for weeks in that living death.

All night they watched beside her bed, but she recognized nothing.

Once she threw up her arms, and called wildly: "Rachel! Rachel!"

They deemed it only a delirious fancy and did not answer; so she relapsed into that stony apathy, and the hours drifted on towards morning through the ceaseless beating of the storm.

(To be continued.)



[STANLEY AND HIS WIFE AT MOSS SPRING.]

STANLEY LOCKWOOD.

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"ANOTHER wound in the back," said Stanley, involuntarily, "another coward thrust."

"Well, as soon as he had told me this," resumed the girl, animated by the impression she had evidently made, "I questioned Mrs. Susan in a roundabout way till I got to the bottom of it all, without telling her a word of the matter. She said Mr. Russell was there for two or three days, and that, one morning, when young Mr. Treadwell was gone out, she saw Mr. Russell through the glass door of the library, for the curtain was a little on one side, and she could see him as plain as could be, though he couldn't see her. Well, she remembers seeing him take up a letter off the secretary, and pull it out of the 'velope,' and ponder over it for ever so long a while, and then he sat down and wrote away upon the letter for a long while, and she thought it was very odd he should write on one of her master's letters. She remembers, too, how he kept looking just over one shoulder, and then over the other, as if somebody was behind him. I suppose he thought the cloven-footed gentleman was at his elbow, and so he was, sure enough. When he had done he put the letter back in the cover, and stuck it into a little book, and put some newspapers on the top of it, and tied them all up together. She never thought no harm, Susan didn't, but she is a mighty observing sort of person, and has got a wonderful strong memory; besides, she says she remembers seeing Mr. Russell give the packet to her master, and ask him to send it to Miss Deloraine, because she likes to read the news."

"This is true," said Treadwell, "I remember his staying at home that morning on the plea of having letters to write, and I unlocked my secretary for his use. I had read him Lockwood's letter the night before, at least a portion of it."

"The packet came in your name," said Flora: "had Mr. Russell been mentioned, I might have suspected something treacherous. Yet even then, blind and wilful girl that I am, I fear I should have been guilty of the same injustice and wrong that through life I shall vainly rue."

Stanley bent down, and said something to her in a low voice that brought a rich glow to her cheeks and a smile to her lips, but no one else heard the words he uttered.

"I told the servant that it was sent by Mr. Russell,

but I suppose he forgot or neglected the message," said Treadwell; "I was not aware that he possessed this wonderful talent of imitation. But what motive could have prompted an act of such cold-blooded malice? Have you ever injured or thwarted him, Lockwood?"

"I have been so unfortunate as to cross his path," answered Stanley, looking unconsciously towards Flora, "and I cannot wonder he does not look upon me as a friend. He has sought to injure me more than once, and the weapons have been turned against his own breast. A man never forgives one he has wronged. This is the secret of Russell's deadly malice: he has more mind than I have given him credit for, and like yourself, I was ignorant of his peculiar talent for forgery."

"I was aware that he excelled in penmanship," said Mr. Courtney, who had been watching for a favourable opening for a speech, "he was distinguished for this when a boy, and amused himself by imitating the handwriting of others. Had my nephew and niece confided to me the very unpleasant circumstances which have come to my knowledge this evening, I think I could have explained them in a satisfactory manner. I regret that I ever encouraged the visits of this exceedingly unworthy young gentleman. I considered him quite irreproachable, but the wisest may err in judging of men. I regret, too, that I allowed him to prejudice me against a very estimable young man. Mr. Lockwood," he added, walking majestically forward, and extending his aristocratic hand, with an act of dignified self-approbation, "let me give you welcome, as far as I am concerned, to Rudland Park, and I trust all unpleasant remembrances will be buried in oblivion."

"But, Bessy," said Flora, while Stanley was receiving with due respect the ostentatious but sincere *amende honorable* of her stately uncle: "I fear you have betrayed my trust: how could Russell have discovered the secret of my disguises?"

"I can tell you that, too, Miss Flora," replied the all-divining Bessy. "You remember one night, when we were in that strange place where Mr. Lockwood lay sick, how you washed the brown dye off your face, and put on your own dress, just to let his father see how pretty you be. Well, after you came back into your room, you sat down near one of the windows, and I was at the other. And then you said to me, Bessy, I hate to put this ugly stuff on my face any more, but I must. That dear good man, says you—that was Mr. Lockwood's father, you know—I do so love him, Bessy, and he seems to love me too. Then you told me to give you the dark coloured liquor to rub over

your face and hands, and I helped you on with your stuff dress, did up your hair, put on your cap, and made you look just as you did afore; and you looked in the glass, and said: 'I wonder if he will know me now.' Then you went out of the room, and directly you were gone I saw a man staring right in at the window, and he could hear every word, for it was open. So when he saw me looking at him he darted off like a snake, and as it was a'most dark I couldn't see which way he went, but I was sure it was Mr. Russell, for I saw his face quite plain. I never said a word about it, 'cause I thought it would frighten Miss Flora, but I thought to myself I shouldn't wonder if he was to go and blab, and make mischief somehow. But after we came home I heard he was gone to some other country, so I didn't trouble myself about it, and I believe he is away now."

"Wherever he may be," exclaimed Stanley, "retribution shall follow him."

"Amen!" responded Deloraine.

"Oh! he is not worthy of your resentment," said Flora. "Surely, Stanley, surely, Charles, you would not condescend to wreak your vengeance on one so far beneath your contempt. The man who could inflict the dastard stroke from which you have so lately recovered, Stanley, should be left to the—"

"Hangman's hands," interrupted Deloraine. "She is right; she always is—that is, sometimes."

"I saw a gentleman a few days since," remarked Mr. Courtney, "who met young Russell at Calais. From his account I should think my niece was correct when she observed that he was unworthy the resentment of an honourable man. He was completely inebriated, and is said to be habitually subject to fits of intoxication. I would advise every self-respecting young man to leave him to the degradation he has brought upon himself."

"Yes," said Flora, "uncle is wise and just in his counsels. Let us leave him to his own evil heart and baffled passions. Let us forget his very name. But how shall we reward our second, or rather third, Daniel—our modern Porcia, who has unravelled this web of deceit, and shown a faith in the honour of our friend that shames our distrust and injustice? Bessy, what can I do for you? You saved my life when a child. You have restored to me a far richer boon than life. Tell me how I can prove my gratitude."

"By just saying nothing at all, Miss Flora," said the modern Porcia. "I love you a heap better than I do myself; and I couldn't be happy when I saw you so melancholy. Every night when you thought I was fast asleep I was watching you by the moonlight, suffering angel as you were, and I felt

almost willing to die, if I could but see you smile again as you used to do."

Flora laid her beautiful hand on Bessy's brown arm, while the tears trembled in her brilliant eyes and her bosom heaved beneath its veiling lace.

"Your own heart will reward you, dear Bessy," she said, "and mine will bless you."

"Bessy, you are a noble girl," cried Deloraine with enthusiasm. "You deserve to be canonized. I will have a statue erected to you, and you shall be worshipped as the presiding genius of distressed lovers through all coming time."

"You make fun of me, Mr. Charles, but no matter. It does me a world of good to see you like yourself again. I don't want nothing to do with cannons, though. I have no use for them."

"You are a kind, excellent, and noble-hearted creature," said Stanley, grasping her hand with cordial gratitude. "As I am the most of all obliged, I ought the most abundantly to reward."

"I am only a foolish girl," said Bessy, laughing, "for all I am trying to make myself out so clever; but I'll tell you what I do want, Mr. Lockwood: if you please, I want to see you and Miss Flora make it up, that's what I want."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Deloraine, laughing, and clapping his hands. "Bravo, Bessy. Verily thou shalt have thy reward! Come, Flora, let us all have the felicity of seeing you make it up with Lockwood as our glorious Queen Bess means, that is, in the good old-fashioned kiss-and-be-friends sort of way."

Flora, over whose face ten thousand blushing shadows were rolling, escaped from the room. Stanley, who knew by intuition that she had gone to the library, soon followed. There he indeed found her, in her favourite window seat, partly shaded by the well-remembered crimson curtain. She was weeping, but her tears were not the night-dew of sorrow; they were the drops of the morning that turn to diamonds in the sun.

"Oh, how much I have to make up to you," she cried, as she shed those blissful tears on the bosom she had thought for ever estranged. "Why did I not believe from the first it was a vile forgery? Ah, it was a self-condemning conscience that made me a coward and a dupe. I feel now, Stanley, that I deserved to fall in your estimation, for allowing my love to triumph over the suggestions of prudence and the counsels of resisting friends. Mrs. Lambert, to whom I confided my plans, brought, with earnest tears, to turn me from my wild purpose, but in vain. My brother was absent. I heard you were dying. The omnipotence of love removed every obstacle. But, oh! I have been rash; and I fear, now, very unwomanly."

"And can you think me such a cold, selfish ingrate?" exclaimed Stanley. "Yes, you have been rash, for what is self-forgetfulness, self-immolation, but rashness? You have been unwomanly only to be angelic. Flora, I have admired your beauty, grace, and talents, more than words of mine have ever told, for my esteem has checked my admiration. I have worshipped you as L'éclair, adored you as Flora, but I love you most of all as the gentle Norah. Oh! be ever the Norah of my heart's home, borne to me with her downy touch and snowflake step, and even the same twilight hue, if you will; and if the world condemns you for a love so far transcending the merits that inspired it, let my lips breathe the verdict for your crime, and imprisonment in my arms be the only penalty which you are doomed to suffer."

"I see you have made it up," said Deloraine, when, some time after he entered the library for pen, ink, and paper, his fine black eyes bright with all their wonted fire. "But you have not allowed poor Bessy the only boon she asked. Any message to your sister, Lockwood?" added he, as he was leaving the room.

"Don't go, Charles," said Flora, "there is the table where you always write, and here are eyes that love to look upon you, Charles. We ought to be called hereafter the Children of the Mist."

"I feel very much like a son of the morning, now," said Deloraine, seating himself before the writing materials. "That was an unhappy allusion, however. You know who was called the Son of the Morning, and how low he fell. Lockwood, my dear fellow, my glorious fellow!" he exclaimed, springing up, and seizing his hand, "if you knew how happy I am, you would not look so intolerably wretched yourself. Seriously, I feel such a specific lightness of spirit, I fear I shall go up in a natural balloon."

"One question," said Flora, turning to Stanley, "I have forgotten to ask. How did you learn the identity of the humble Norah and the proud Flora Deloraine?"

A shadow came over the sunny brow of her lover. The solemn scene of his father's death-bed rose up before him, and chastened the rapture of reconciliation.

"My father, dear Flora," he answered, "with his dying lips revealed the tenderness of the heart whose constancy I was forced to doubt. He justified you

with his last fading breath, while he told me of the boundless debt my life's devotion never can repay."

That was a glorious evening at Rudland Park, as Deloraine said more than once. Flora's gay laugh was heard in silvery music once more in her dwelling.

Her magnificent voice again accompanied the keys of her neglected instrument. The flowers that had seemed scentless and dim, blushed with new bloom and sweetness.

Everything had the brightness and beauty of a new creation, for Paradise was regained in their hearts.

If Bessy was a favourite before, there was no limit to the favours heaped upon her from this period. The gratitude of those whom her shrewd and active spirit had restored to happiness did not evaporate in a few words of promise.

They vied with each other in the number and value of their gifts, till Bessy said her trunk was "nothing but a show-box, sure enough."

And now the sky is all blue, the current smooth, and the gales propitious, we feel as if we ought to lay down our pen. Indeed, the sunshine is too bright, it is dazzling. Where is the artist who ever attempted to paint a noonday sun?

Owing to the determined and spirited conduct of Stanley Lockwood, Mr. Haselton had escaped the ruinous consequences of Selby's treachery.

The arrest of the latter, the exposure of his friends, and the recovery of the vast sum of money with which he had deceived, absolved his kind but incautious friend from the greater part of his liabilities, so that his loss was comparatively trifling, and he was spared the pain of being compelled to reduce his establishment.

After the usual time consecrated to the memory of the dead, there was a splendid wedding at Oak Tree Hill, not destined to so disastrous a termination as that of the ill-fated Iris.

It is an astonishing fact that Dorothy survived the elation and excitement of the occasion. To see Miss Mary, the child of her hopes and prayers, the mistress of such a noble place as Rudland Park, to say nothing of her princely gifted husband, was the crown of her earthly ambition.

As the still-lovely and charming Mrs. Haselton looked on the sweet young bride whom she loved with all a mother's tenderness, and thought of the night when she first saw her, a poor and isolated little child, she blessed God, who put it into her heart to love and cherish her, and nurture her into the bloom and the beauty of womanhood.

It was a moment to be remembered when Dorothy bade adieu to Oak Tree Hill, and, rolling in a carriage behind her young mistress, followed her to her new home.

She kept nodding her head to the servants as long as she could catch a glimpse of the trees, smiles and tears contending on her honest countenance.

The habit of exaggeration she had acquired at the ferryman's cabin, had long since died in the plenitude and luxury in which she had been living.

But it was owing to the purifying influence of religion, which opened her eyes to the beauty of truth, and convinced her that even affection pure as hers could not sanctify the white lies she formerly thought it no sin to utter.

Poor Muza could not bid Mary good-bye. He gave her a parting serenade with his beloved violin, but hid himself when the hour of separation arrived.

Deloraine endeavoured to persuade him that Bessy was worthy to supplant the lost Iris in his affections; but the true-hearted servant never suffered his constancy to the memory of his beautiful lost one to vary one hair's breadth.

He felt with O'Connor's child—

Oh what is any living love,
To that which cannot quit the dead.

Shortly after the bride and bridegroom returned from their wedding tour, the same party assembled at Rudland Park, to grace the nuptials of the beautiful heiress. And visitors came also from north and south, east and west, for the invitations were sent far and wide.

It was a joyous and magnificent festival, as well it might be, for such a pair as Stanley Lockwood and Flora Deloraine is seldom found among every-day mortals.

Mr. Courtney was there as a guest, but he had left the hall on his nephew's marriage, being too well versed in proprieties, or perhaps too proud, to remain where he could no longer consider himself master.

Good Mrs. Lambert has not acted a prominent part in this narrative, but she immortalized herself by the wedding breakfast and all the accompaniments of the festival.

The table was spread in the great hall, and, leaving to the imagination of our readers the profusion and variety of the delicacies that formed the substantial part of the banquet, we will only describe some of its tasteful adornments.

Real, living, blooming, aromatic flowers exhaled their perfume from rich, silver vases the whole length and breadth of the table, and were festooned in garlands all around the wall.

Over each end of the table was suspended a canopy of flowers, in honour of each bridal pair. Nothing could be more graceful or beautiful than these novel decorations. They were formed of several graduated hoops, entwined with evergreens and flowers, and the cords that confined them together at regular intervals were wreathed with the same glowing blossoms.

As these sweet fairy pavilions, softly, gently swaying in the breeze, rose in floral beauty above the two lovely brides, they might have been taken for two May Queens in their coronation bower.

It was a happy day for Bessy, who looked something like a bride herself, so handsome and tasteful was her attire.

"Well I do say," she repeated for the twentieth time at least, "that Miss Flora and young Mr. Lockwood are the gloriouslest couple that ever was created, and the way they do love each other—oh! just see her look up at him with them eyes of hers. Now, who ever did see a pair of eyes that could hold a candle to 'er?"

"Miss Mary's can," said Dorothy, her family pride and affection kindling as she spoke. "I mean young Mrs. Deloraine, heaven bless her sweet face! See how she's looking down, so modest and tender, and then she's so fair and white you can hardly tell which is which, her cheek or her veil. Bless her little heart, I can see it flutter about, now. She couldn't speak a cross word to save her life. She's like the blessed virgins that kept their lamps trimmed and burning waiting for the bridegroom to come."

"She's werry pretty, but Miss Flora beats her all hollow," persisted Bessy. "She looks all life and spirit, and that's what I like to see; but she is as gentle as a lamb for all that."

Mr. Courtney, who sat at the right hand of the bride, made a characteristic speech on the occasion, accompanied by an extra set of flourishes, and Stanley replied to it with all the eloquence for which he was so eminently distinguished.

At length the breakfast was over, the adieux were spoken, and Stanley with his bright and beautiful L'éclair, departed for the Highlands, where they intended to spend the honeymoon.

We thought we had bidden a last farewell to the beautiful fountain we love so well. We did not know that Flora would insist upon her husband taking her to the scene of his early struggles and his father's last rest. But she did, and before he transplanted her to the home he had made, he carried her to the lone spot we have so often visited. He took her into the cabin where his old friend, the ferryman's wife, still presided, and who greeted them with heartiest cordiality. But the walls were no longer dark and gloomy. A pure surface of white plaster greeted the eye, and the furniture and curtains made quite a modern appearance.

The mistress, too, of the regenerated mansion harmonized in her neat apparel with the improved and beautiful aspect of the place. The visits of Stanley to the home of his childhood had awakened in her heart the love of the beautiful, and his liberality had enabled her to fit up the old cabin, and convert it into a pleasant and comfortable dwelling-place. To the hand that had transplanted the wild rose to the grave of old Morgan and that watered the flower that blossomed on his father's grassy bed, he could assign no niggard boon.

He led his young wife to the Long Moss Spring, and seated her on the snowy rock so often his throne, and she watched the shadow of the magnolia and the shiny holly playing on her brow. They drank together of the waters, purer than Castilian dew, and looked upon each other's faces in the blue mirror beneath. Then, hand in hand, they knelt by the grave of Lockwood, and mingled their sighs with the wind that whispered mournfully with the rustling grass. They bent over the spot where the aged soldier slept, and plucked some of the roses that bloomed luxuriantly there.

Mr. Haselton had ordered a marble tomb to the memory of his friend, but it was not yet completed. Stanley was glad that Flora should see the spot just as God had made it, with no influence but that of nature breathing into her soul.

"Oh!" exclaimed Flora, as he drew her reluctant steps from the fountain's side. "Let us build a cottage on this enchanting spot, and come and dwell in this sweet and lonely Paradise. Would this be world enough for thee?"

"No, my gentle Norah," answered Stanley, the lofty glance of ambition flashing from his eyes, mingling with the softer radiance of love, "dearly as I love you, and though I could be happy blessed with you, were Providence to cast me on Crusoe's desert isle, I should not be true to my duty if I voluntarily buried in solitude the talents God has given me to

glorify him in a more extended sphere. Neither would my bright and high-souled L'éclair. She was formed to gladden and beautify the world, as well as to be the angel of my Eden home. But we will have a cottage here, where we can sometimes come and bathe our spirits in the heavenly beauty of this scene. This shall be a resting-place to refresh us through the journey of life, and, oh! Flora, when that pilgrimage is over, may we sleep, side by side, with our buried father, near the margin of the Long Moss Spring!"

Flora turned aside her head to hide the tears that gathered in her eyes. Her heart was too full of love and happiness not to be chilled by the cold thought of mortality.

Stanley put his arm round her, and gently drew her to the river's shore, where the old ferry-boat lay dark and lazy, like an old negro basking in the sun.

The ferryman's wife stood gazing at them from the door of the cabin. Stanley beckoned to her, pointing to the poles, and she came with a quick step and smiling countenance.

"Will you help me once again?" he asked, unfastening the chain, and lifting Flora lightly into the boat. "I must ferry her across this river of many memories."

"Yes, that I will, and thank you, too," answered the woman, and Flora herself floating on the dark, flowing stream, while Stanley dashed the pole into the current with all the wild grace of boyhood combined with manhood's strength.

The sun went behind a cloud, and he hung his hat on the lantern-post, so that the river-breeze rustled freely through his magnificent locks.

Flora gazed on his splendid figure, in the attitude of unconscious grace it had assumed, with eyes of adoration; then, moved by a sudden impulse, she stooped over the edge of the boat, and dipping the water in her hand, sprinkled it laughingly over his waving hair.

"Ah, fairy of the fountain," he exclaimed, "that was a never-to-be-forgotten baptism, and this I receive as a new consecration. Beautiful, life-giving element, I welcome the purifying drops! Flora, the sweetest, dearest associations of my life cluster round the welling spring. Thanks be to God for the fountain's gush and the river's flow!"

Sweet in after-life was the remembrance of this scene.

Stanley Lockwood has not yet reached the zenith of his fame, but, like the ascending sun, it shineth brighter and brighter into the perfect day.

His motto is *Excelsior*—his goal the highest summit of human ambition; that is, the glory of God, and the good of man. And whether, as the glowing lightning playing lamently on the horizon of his existence, or as the waxing moon shining with increasing lustre on the rising tide of his affections, or as the gentle rose shedding sweetness and beauty on his heart, Flora is still the angel of his Eden home.

THE END.

CHRISTIAN NAMES.—We give the following lists of girls' names that have been sent by various correspondents:—Coca, Ohio, Oisic, Dora, Daisy, Daphne, Eoa, Eva, Edith, Ethel, Edna, Ella, Elsie, Elthe, Edna, Elise, Enid, Elaine, Etta, Flora, Gertrude, Guinevere, Hilda, Hildegarde, Helen, Iona, Iona, Irene, Inez, Isa, Justine, Lily, Lilla, Lillian, Lella, Mabel, Maude, May, Maud, Myrie, Mora, Mona, Medea, Norah, Nydia, Nina, Nona, Oona, Olga, Ora, Owen, Eonone, Olive, Ondine, Psyche, Phillis, Quetta, Ruth, Sybil, Stella, Theo, Thibet, Undine, Una, Udda, Violet, Verena, Viola, Winifred, Zuleika, Zaidce, Zera, Xora, Xera.

GRUMBLING.—Some people are for ever grumbling. If they have not great troubles, they have little ones to keep them fretting, and many would say of them that they grumble merely for pastime. A fretful disposition is of no advantage—it only makes the possessor and those connected with him miserable. The better way is always to look on the bright side of things, for we shall meet with trouble enough in the world, without turning out of our way to seek it. Grumbling makes a hard job harder, sours the temper, unnecessarily fatigues both body and mind, and never facilitates business.

THE DISHONEST ELEPHANT KEEPER.—The instincts of some animals seem so nearly allied to reason, that we could accord to them almost a human intelligence; in fact, without exaggeration, we may say, in a modified sense, they do reason. The following anecdote told of an elephant, illustrates this point quite forcibly: An officer in the Bengal army had a favourite elephant, which was supplied daily in his presence with a certain amount of food, but being compelled to absent himself on a journey, the keeper of the beast diminished the ration, and the animal became daily thinner and weaker. When its master returned, the elephant exhibited the greatest signs of pleasure; the feeding-time came, and the keeper laid before it the

former full allowance of food, which it divided into two parts, consuming one immediately, and leaving the other untouched. The officer, knowing the sagacity of his favourite, saw immediately the fraud that had been practised, and made the man confess his crime.

THE DISCONTENTED WATER-CARRIER. A TURKISH TALE.

"THERE goes the Vizier and his gaudy train!
While I, poor Hassan, indigent and old,
Must carry water; well, I can't explain
Why one wears rags, another cloth-of-gold."

"The single diamond that bedecks his sword
Would set me up a gentleman for life;
And now God bless me! I cannot afford
A pair of scarlet trousers for my wife!"

"With half the money that his servants waste
Each day in nicknacks, it is very clear
My family might live like kings, and taste
Roast kid for dinner fifty times a year."

"It may be just; I don't affirm 'tis not;
Allah is Allah!—and knows what is best;
But if, for mine, I had the Vizier's lot,
'Twould please me vast; better, I protest!"

So murmured Hassan, vexed within himself
To see the Vizier riding proudly by;
When suddenly a little fairy elf
Appeared before him with a twinkling eye.

"Peace!" said the Fairy; "ere thy speech begun
I knew to what thy present thoughts incline,
Choose any gift thou wilt (but only one)
And, by my kingdom! it shall soon be thine!"

Poor Hassan, filled with joy, at once began:
"I fain would have—" but paused before the word

Escaped his mouth; or, sooth to say, the man
Had named the jewel on the Vizier's sword!

What next he thought to choose, was all the gold
That filled the Caliph's coffers; then he thought
Of Bagdad's riches; then the wealth untold
Of all the earth—so fast his fancy wrought!

Such various wishes thronged his teeming brain,
He pondered long, until the Fairy's voice
Showed some impatience, and the man was fain
From very fear to hasten in his choice.

But halting still when at the point to tell
His final wish, the Fairy kindly told
(To aid his choosing) of a hidden well
Filled to the brim with jewels and with gold.

And then she led him to a secret grot,
Where, underneath a stone, the treasure lies,
Removed the slab that sealed the sacred spot,
And showed the riches to his wondering eyes.

"Take what you will of this exhaustless store;
But, mark you!—if you pause to dine or sup,
Your work is finished; you can have no more;
The stone will move and close the coffer up."

Charmed with the sight that met his dazzled gaze
He stood enrapt; then turned to thank the fairy
For so much bounty; but, to his amazement,
The nimble spirit unseen had fled away.

Whatever three ample water-skins could hold
Was soon his own; but this contents him not;
Unnumbered coins of silver and of gold
Invite his spade, and chain him to the spot.

"Another hour of digging will suffice,"
Quoth Hassan, delving with increasing greed;
"Well—by the Prophet!—here is something nice!
Rubies and diamonds! this is wealth indeed!"

And so he dug (remembering the hint
The Fairy gave him) till his busy spade
Had piled a mound so vast, the Caliph's mint
Could scarce have matched the glittering heap he made.

And yet he toils, as greedy as before:
"A little more!" said Hassan, "ere the sun
Sinks in the West—some fifty shovels more,
And this day's work—a brave one! will be done!"

Poor Hassan!—heedless of the fading day,
He wrought at night as he had wrought at noon,
Weary and faint, but impotent to stay
His eager hand beneath the rising moon.

"A little more!" the miser said, "and I
Will make an end." He raised his weary hand
To delve again; then dropt it with a sigh,
So weak and worn that he could hardly stand.

Fatal Ambition! from his golden bed
He tries in vain to reach the giddy height;
The shining heap comes tumbling on his head,
And shuts poor Hassan in eternal night!

J. G. S.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH.—A real valley of death exists in Java. It is termed the "Valley of Poison," and is filled to a considerable height with carbonic acid gas, which is exhaled from crevices in the ground. If a man, or any animal, enter it, he cannot return; and he is not sensible of his danger until he feels himself sinking under the poisonous influence of the atmosphere which surrounds him, the carbonic acid of which it chiefly consists rising to the height of eighteen feet from the bottom of the valley. Birds which fly into this atmosphere drop down dead; and a living fowl, thrown into it, dies before it reaches the bottom, which is strewed with the carcasses of various animals that have perished in the deleterious gas.

SMELL OF BLIGHT IN THE AIR.

A FEW evenings ago, when at Herne Bay, in Kent, between eight and nine in the evening, I observed a haze spread over the horizon, and gradually rolling along the sea from the eastward. At the same time I observed that the air was highly impregnated with an odour as of burning wood. I remarked this to Captain Gardiner, an old inhabitant of Herne Bay, and he at once told me that the odour in the air was "the smell of the blight." There could be no burning wood out at sea in the direction from which the wind was blowing, and that at this time of the year it was by no means uncommon, coming sometimes in the morning, but generally in the evening.

After the smell of this blight had come up from the eastward, Captain Gardiner observed a blight in the form of minute insect life upon the apple and cherry trees in his garden. The appearance of the blight was nearly always concomitant with, or rather subsequent to, this peculiar "burning wood" smell in the air. I asked a friend of mine who has a farm in the neighbourhood of Herne Bay about this. He quite confirmed the statement of the captain, and told me that when driving home in the evening, "the smell of the blight" came quite strong into his face, "like the smell of burning stubble."

The height of the blight haze, the captain told me, was generally about four or five degrees above the horizon. The pole star at Herne Bay is about fifty-two degrees above the horizon, and this would give a standard of measurement for the blight haze. And I also learnt, what I did not know before, that the height of the pole star is generally about the latitude of the place from whence we observed the star; and thus Herne Bay is about latitude fifty-one and a half, and the pole star is fifty-two degrees high, or thereabouts. The altitude of the pole star is therefore nearly the latitude of the place.

As the blight haze was advancing towards us, I thought of testing if there really was anything alive and floating in the atmosphere; so I covered two sheets of white paper with gum, and placed them so that the breeze should blow direct upon them. The next morning I found most of the paper blank; but yet there was one tiny speck of a black insect fast in the gum. I fear that the gum got dry too fast, or I should have caught more insects. The "flies," I understand, has been lately seen on the young hops, and has committed great ravages. Whence comes this flea? and whence come the numerous minute insects that go under the name of blight, that settle on the vegetation at this time of year? Are they simply the result of eggs laid last year by the parent, which have been dormant all last winter, and have just come to life, or do they come in the "blight haze" from the atmosphere? F. B.

A CURIOUS case is being tried in Paris. A celebrated hairdresser conceived the bright and logical idea that as mushrooms grow so quickly, they would cause hair to grow as quickly, upon the style of logic that he who kills fat oxen must himself be fat. He got a patient very soon at a high rate of remuneration, but the bald head grew no hair rub in mushroom sauce as the hairdresser would, but he produced another crop, which is the cause of this action—a dreadful amount of boils upon the poor man's noddle. The hairdresser pleads the permission of the patient to experiment upon him.

CONDEMNED MEAT, FISH, POULTRY, AND GAME IN THE LONDON MARKETS.—Returns have been presented to the Court of Common Council of all meat, fish, and poultry condemned by the inspectors at the various City markets from October 1, 1885, to April 1, 1886. We gather from these returns that the total quantity of condemned meat at Newgate Market was 10,080 lb., which included 77 qrs. of beef, 28 sheep, 12 pigs, 4 calves, and 11 pieces of pork. At Leadenhall Market the total quantity was 2,820 lb. A total of 166,306 lb. was seized in other city markets during the same time. The poultry and game condemned at Leadenhall Market amounted to a total of 6,532 head. Of these, partridges contributed not less than 2,243, prairie birds from America 666, woodcocks 554,

snipes 593, and black game 476. The quantity of fish seized by the meters and inspectors appointed by the Fishmongers' Company was, in October, 15,482; in November, 58,572; in December, 12,860; in January, 18,735; February, 7,513; and March, 1,537. The details show that the highest number condemned in any month was:—Smelts, 41,630; whittings, 8,120; herrings, 8,000; dabs, 4,146; gurnets, 3,800; haddock, 2,700; plaice, 2,710. There were also in one month 820 gallons of shrimps and 245 bushels of sprats.

THE MAIDEN'S CHOICE.

Two offers at once! You are truly a favoured maiden, Rose," said Annette Lewis, to her young friend, Rose Lilton, in a gay tone. "It is husband or no husband with most of us; but you have a choice between two."

"And happy shall I be if I have the wisdom to choose rightly," was the reply of Rose.

"If it were my case, I do not think I should have much difficulty in making a choice."

"Don't you? Suppose, then, you give me the benefit of your preference."

"Oh no, not for the world!" replied Annette, laughing. "I'm afraid you might be jealous of me afterwards."

"Never fear. I am not of a jealous disposition."

"No, I won't commit myself with regard to your lovers. But if they were mine I would soon let it be known where my preference lay."

"Then you won't assist me in coming to a decision? Surely I am entitled to this act of friendship."

"If you put it upon that ground, Rose, I do not see how I can refuse."

"I do put it upon that ground, Annette. And now, I ask you, as a friend, to give me your opinion of the two young men, James Hambleton and Marcus Gray, who have seen such wonderful attractions in my humble self, as to become suitors for my hand at the same time."

"Decidedly, then, Rose, I should prefer Marcus Gray."

"There is about him, certainly, Annette, much to attract a maiden's eye, and to captivate her heart; but it has occurred to me, that the most glittering surface does not always indicate the purest gold beneath. I remember, once, having seen a massive chain, wrought from the pure metal, placed beside another that was far inferior in quality, but with a surface of ten times richer hue. Had I not been told the difference, I should have chosen the latter as in every way more valuable. But when it was explained that one bore the genuine hue of gold, while the other had been coloured by a process known to jewellers, I was struck with the lesson it taught."

"What lesson, Rose?"

"That the richest substance has not always the most glittering exterior. That real worth, satisfied with the consciousness of interior soundness of principle, assumes few imposing exterior aspects and forms."

"And that rule you apply to these two young men?"

"By that rule I wish to be guided, in some degree, in my choice, Annette. I wish to keep my mind so balanced, that it may not be swayed from a sound discrimination by anything of merely imposing exterior."

"But is not the exterior—that which meets the eye—all we can judge from? Is not the exterior a true expression of that which is within?"

"Not by any means, Annette. I grant that it should be, but it is not. Look at the fact I have just named respecting the gold chains."

"But they were inanimate substances. They were not faces, where thoughts, feelings, and principles find expression."

"Do you suppose, Annette, that bad gold would ever have been coloured so as to look even more beautiful than that which is genuine, if there had not been men who assumed exterior graces and virtues that were not in their minds? No; the very fact you adduce strengthens my position. The time was, in the earlier and purer ages—the golden ages—of the world's existence, when the countenance was the true index of the mind. Then, it was a well-tuned instrument, and the mind within a skilful player, to whose touch every muscle and chord and minute fibre gave answering melody. That time has passed. Men, now, school their faces to deception. It is an art which we nearly all practise but too often. We study to appear what we are not. Look at some men whom we meet every day; with faces whose calmness, I should rather say, rigidity, gives no evidence that a single emotion ever crosses the waveless ocean of their minds. But it is not so. The mind within is active with thought and feeling. But the instrument formed for it to play upon

has lost its tune, or bears only relaxed or broken chords."

"You have a strange, visionary way of talking, sometimes, Rose," replied Annette, as her friend ceased speaking. "All that may do for your German transcendentalists, or whatever you call them; but it won't do when you come down to the matter-of-fact business of life."

"To me, it seems eminently a practical principle, Annette. We must act, in all important matters in life, with a just discrimination; and how can we truly discriminate, if we are not well versed in those philosophical principles upon which, and only upon which, right discriminations can be made?"

"I must confess, Rose," replied her young friend, "that I do not see that all this has much bearing upon the matter under discussion; or, at least, I cannot see the truth of its application. Gold never assumes a leaden exterior."

"Well?"

"We need not be very eminent philosophers to distinguish one from the other."

"No, of course not."

"Very well. Here is Marcus Gray, with a genuine golden exterior, and James Hambleton with a leaden one."

"I do not grant the position, Annette. It is true that Mr. Hambleton is not so brilliant and showy; but I have found in him one quality I have not yet discovered in the other."

"What is that?"

"Depth of feeling and high moral principle."

"You certainly do not pretend to affirm that Mr. Gray has neither feeling nor principle?"

"Of course I do not. I only say that I have never yet perceived any very strong indications of their existence."

"Why, Rose?"

"I am in earnest, Annette. I doubt not that he possesses both, and, I trust too, in a high degree. But he seems to be so constantly acting a brilliant and effective part, that nature, unadorned and simple, has no chance to speak out. It is not so with Mr. Hambleton. Every word he utters shows that he is speaking what he really feels; and often, though not so highly polished in speech as Mr. Gray, I have heard him utter sentiments of genuine truth and humanity, in a tone that made my heart bound with pleasure, at recognizing the simple eloquence of his nature. His character, Annette, I find it in no way difficult to read; that of Marcus Gray puzzles my closest scrutiny."

"I certainly cannot sympathize with you in your singular notions, Rose," her friend replied. "Certain it is, that I never discovered either of the peculiarities in these young men that you seem to make of so much importance. As for Mr. Gray, he is a man of whom any woman might feel proud, for he combines intelligence and courteous manners with a fine person—while this Hambleton is, to me, insufferably stupid. And no one, I am sure, can call his address and manners anything like polished. Indeed, I should pronounce him downright boorish and awkward. Who would want a man for a husband of whom she would be ashamed? Not I, certainly."

"I will readily grant you, Annette," Rose said, as her friend ceased speaking, "that Mr. Hambleton's exterior attractions are not to be compared with those of Mr. Gray. But, as I have said, in a matter like this, where it is the quality of the mind, and not the external appearance of the man alone that is to give happiness, it behoves a maiden to look beneath the surface, as I am trying to do now."

"But I could not love a man like Mr. Hambleton, unless, indeed, there were no possibility of getting any one else. In that case I would make a choice of evils between single blessedness and such a husband. But, to have two such offers, as you have, Rose, and hesitate to make a choice, strikes me as singular indeed."

"I do not hesitate, Annette," was the quiet reply.

"Have you then, indeed, decided, Rose?"

"I have—and this conversation has caused me to decide; for, as it has progressed, my mind has been enabled to see truly the real difference in the characters of my suitors."

"You have, then, decided in favour of Mr. Gray?"

"Indeed I have not, Annette. Though I admire his fine talents, and his polished exterior, I have never been able to perceive in him those qualities on which my heart can rest in confidence. He may possess these in even a higher degree than Mr. Hambleton, but I am afraid to run so great a risk. In the latter, I know there are moral qualities that I can love and depend upon."

"But he is so dull, Rose."

"I really do not think so, Annette. There is not so much flash about him, if I may use the word, as about Mr. Gray. But as to his being dull, I must beg to differ with you. To me, his conversation is always interesting."

"It never is so to me. And, besides all that, his tastes and mine are as widely different as the poles. Why, Rose, if you become his wife, you will sink into obscurity at once. He never can make any impression on society. It is not in him."

"Rather make no impression on society at all, than a false or disgraceful one, say I," was the firm reply of Rose.

"You cannot, certainly, mean to say," returned her friend, "that the impression made upon society by Mr. Gray is either a false or disgraceful one."

"I should be sorry to make that assertion, for I do not believe such to be the case," Rose replied. "What I mean is, that I can read Mr. Hambleton's true character, and know it to be based upon fixed and high-toned principles. These can never make the woman who truly loves him unhappy. They give place to no moral contingencies, by which hopes are so often wrecked, and hearts broken. Now, with regard to Mr. Gray, there is nothing in his character, so far as I can read it, upon which to predicate safe calculations of this kind. He is intelligent, and highly interesting as a companion. His personal appearance and address are attractive. But all below the exterior is hidden. The moral qualities of the man never show themselves. I feel that to give my heart to such an one would be risking too much. Of course I must decline his offer."

"Indeed, indeed, Rose, I think you are very foolish!" "Time will show, Annette."

"Yes, time will show," was the prophetic response. And time did show that Rose made a right choice when she accepted the offer of James Hambleton, and gave him a warm, true heart. Wisely and well did she choose, for, in her choice, she was governed by a rational conviction that James Hambleton's character was based upon high moral principles. In resting her hopes upon these, she had nothing to fear.

In some future number, we may sketch the domestic history of Marcus Gray, and his wife Annette—for Annette Lewis received an offer from him after Rose had declined accepting his proposals of marriage, to which offer she gave a prompt affirmative. It will show that Rose rightly discriminated in judging between his character, and that of the man to whom she yielded her hand. J. S. A.

It is reckoned that in France there are 75,000 persons blind of one eye, making, of course, by a division sum that Mr. Gladstone would understand, (as according to him everything can be divided), 37,500 persons totally blind.

A SCARCITY of ivory is predicted; the demand for Sheffield alone kills 20,000 elephants a year. In process of time no more elephants will remain to be killed, all the tusks will be used up, and then what shall we do for ivory handles to our knives?

A STRANGE illness, which has resulted in the sudden death of several people in Norway, has been traced to the oysters—largely eaten by all classes in the country—which are said to be just now suffering from a species of oyster plague.

WILLIAM BAKER, a hawker of fish, residing in Temple Street, was fined £5 and costs by the Newport justices for exposing for sale unwholesome mackerel. The law authorizes the magistrates to impose a penalty of £20 for each fish offered, which in Baker's case would have been £4000.

THE *Symphore* of Marseilles announces the arrival at that port, from the East, of Lady Franklin, widow of the explorer of the Polar regions. Her ladyship soon after embarked for Bastia, with the intention of visiting Corsica and Sardinia. She is in her eighty-third year and enjoys excellent health.

A LAMPLIGHTER named Salter has been committed for thirty burglaries and ten robberies, at Preston. He had been considered an honest, steady man, but at length was detected with stolen property in his possession, and in his house a clue to the burglaries and robberies, which had so long been puzzling the police, was found, and they were traced home to him.

A CANADIAN adventurer named Hudson is building a metallic life-boat, twenty-six feet long and six broad, which is to be ship-rigged, and to carry a crew of one man. In it he purposes to sail next spring from Quebec to London and thence to Paris, where he will exhibit his vessel—if it ever gets there—at the Exhibition of 1867.

THE ducal title has not been conferred by the Crown on any individual, except the present Duchess of Inverness, from the year 1833, when the Dukes of Cleveland and Sutherland were created, until this last month, when Prince Alfred was gazetted Duke of Edinburgh. With the exception of the marquises of Normandy and Dalhousie (the latter of which is extinct), the second order of the peerage has not been conferred on any individual since 1831, a period of thirty-five years.



[THE ARCHDUKE ALBRECHT.]

THE CONTINENTAL WAR.

At length, after much negotiation, and a vast amount of talking, under the pretence—pretence, at least, as far as the King of Prussia is concerned, who long since determined upon hostilities—Europe finds itself in the very midst of a terrible war, which unfortunately promises to become general; and so the Treaty of Vienna, under which, fifty years ago, a great portion of Europe was re-parcelled out, or “settled,” as the potentates of that time were pleased to term it, are torn asunder as so much waste paper.

That this treaty was in its intent and purpose, not for the advantage of the Peoples, but for the aggrandizement of its respective framers, who have ever since been quarrelling over their different divisions of the spoil, is evinced by the fact, that scarcely had the heat of war cooled, and the exhausted nations taken breathing time, when the breath of avarice and discontent fanned into strong life again the moribund embers, and so they continued to increase in strength until the ambitious designs of Russia brought about the Crimean war; and the tyranny of King Bomba, of Naples, brought into existence the new Kingdom of Italy, at the expense of the Austrians, who were expelled from Lombardy, and the Sovereigns of Naples, the Two Sicilies, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena, all of whose territories are now included in the kingdom over which at present rules Victor Emmanuel, once styled King of Sardinia, but who is equally dear to the Italians as the hero of Goito and Novara, when, as Duke of Savoy, in 1848, he fought the battle of Italy against the Austrians, under his gallant but unfortunate father, Charles Albert, who shortly afterwards abdicated in Victor Emmanuel's favour.

Like Garibaldi, the late great Minister, Count Cavour,

Victor Emmanuel is animated by the spirit of Hannibal, and thus has lived, and lives now, but to drive the hated Austrians from the soil of Italy. But the other day, the heroic patriot Garibaldi, in addressing his volunteers, said—“You are a lucky generation. Do you understand me? While your fathers lived in hopeless bondage to the yoke of the stranger, it is your destiny to drive the foreigner from the soil. You are a lucky nation, and I most lucky to belong to you still.” And with this spirit, not only the King, Minister, and General, but the whole mass of the people are inspired. Longing for a United Italy, the Italians were greatly inspired by their success at Magenta and Solferino; but, alas! the alliance seemed to be as bad as it was good; they had an ally in Napoleon, who, in his astute wisdom, decided upon a peace at Villafranca, and so, with the work well begun, they had to content themselves with permitting Austria still to retain Venetia. Still, with never-dying hate for the foreigner, they bided their opportunity, and that was the quarrel between Austria and Prussia; and the latter, calculating the importance of alliance with the sovereign of a kingdom whose population is nearly twenty-four millions, was as glad to enter into a treaty of co-operation with the King of Italy, as the latter was to accept such powerful aid in driving the Austrians from Italy. The cause of the war, then, between Italy and Austria is the possession of Venetia by the latter. Whether Italy will be successful, however, is very doubtful to the minds of the best military authorities; for, like the cities of fairy stories, it is guarded by four giants of immense strength—literally, the Quadrilateral, of which we have heard so much, and which consists of the fortresses of Peschiera, Mantua, Legnano and Verona. How impregnable is this position we may imagine, remembering that even Louis Napoleon, with the

finest army in Europe, and flushed with success, was, it is said, afraid to attack it.

The cause of the quarrel between Prussia and Austria is very different: it is, in fact, and literally, a battle royal for supremacy in Germany. “Prussia,” says King William, in his proclamation, “is fighting for existence, but should the Almighty bless her arms, she hopes to be strong enough to reunite more prosperously in another shape the loose tie which held the German Crowns together more in name than fact.”

The dispute dates as far back as the days of the Great Frederick, for it was he, or the Great Elector, who established that dualism which set the North of the Empire in antagonism with the South—an antagonism which could only end either in the perpetual division of Germany into two States, or in the absorption of one into the other. What the Seven Years' War sowed, the campaign of 1866 is to reap. Europe might well have striven to put off the solution of the great German question, but it could not eventually avert it.

Whatever may be the opinions respecting the justice of the cause of either Power, there can be but little doubt that the war will, beneficially for the ultimate peace of Europe, result in the absorption of most of those petty sovereignties (some thirty-three or more) into one or the other of the great Powers; for the age which has seen the absorption of great duchies and a kingdom into that of the Italian monarchy, must feel scandalized at the existence of a sovereign Principality (Lichtenstein), with a population of 7,150, and some seven or eight other powerful sovereignties, not one of whose populations reaches 100,000, or inclusively, twenty-nine, whose populations reach 1,000,000.

As our readers are aware, the war was commenced in Germany by Prussia, who has broken into three states, like the wolf on the fold—into countries after which she has longed for years and years—into that Hanover, which Napoleon so often held out as a decoy to the Prussian Court, and so soon as it snapped at it took back again; into Electoral Hesse, which she before regarded as a vassal state, and to which she transmitted her orders by couriers; and, lastly, into that noble old state of Saxony, the one half of which she swallowed up fifty years ago. That other Principalities, probably Hesse Darmstadt, Nassau, and Brunswick, will share a similar fate, there is little doubt. Nay, that in the field she will ultimately prove triumphant, there can be but little doubt; for although on the Silesian frontier, opposed by one of the finest armies Austria ever sent forth, its lines even extending to a length of about eighty English miles, and under a general (Benedek) reputed to be one of the best in Europe, Prussia, within comparatively a few days, has beaten the mighty Austrian host and pursued it far into Bohemia, killing and taking prisoners about 60,000 men, an achievement that has caused no little chagrin to those military authorities who have so over-estimated the powers of Benedek. The latter chief, so long accredited with genius, even for a mysterious inaction that has puzzled Europe but greatly advantaged his enemy, has to the present time exhibited nothing but the well-known gallantry of his race, which, combined with the proverbial indecision of Austrian magnates in general, has led so many brave men to their graves.

Those who have placed so much confidence in the Austrian armies, endeavour to trace their signal defeat to the wholesale desertion of the troops, and to the murderous fire kept up by the new weapon—the “needle-gun.” Be the causes, however, what they may, and admitting, as far as her dispute with Prussia is concerned, Austria is not in the wrong, even then, once more in the history of battles, Prussia has proved that a new weapon can win a campaign, and that “might is stronger than right,” for of almost incalculable importance must these early victories eventually prove, and that despite the success gained over the Italians before Verona by the great army under the Archduke Albrecht, a portrait of whom we are this week enabled to give to our readers. Of this Prince, however, much more need not be said, than that he is a near blood relative of the Emperor of Austria, the Commander-in-Chief of the Austrians in Italy, a good general, and, like the rest of the House of Hapsburg, a gallant soldier.

Since the outbreak of the war great has been the speculation as to which side the Emperor of the French would give the weight of his influence, and those were not wanting who spitefully predicted that he waited only until the belligerents had, like the Kilkenny cats, destroyed each other, to go in and seize the spoil. But the French Emperor was wise in his generation: disliking the rapacity of Prussia, yet from his own antecedents not being consistently able to unsheath his sword against Italy, a kingdom which may be said to be the child of his creation, and to which in his programme for the basis of a congress, he covertly promised his influence in obtaining for her the much-coveted Venetia, he awaited patiently the course of events. Strangely enough, since writing the former

portion of this article, the telegraphic wires confirm our assertion that the victories gained by Prussia were of the last importance; it may lead even to the termination of this, at least, as far as Germany is concerned, unnatural war. In a sentence, the oracle of Paris, speaking through the *Moniteur* of July the 5th, has said:—

"An important event has just occurred. After having maintained the honour of his arms in Italy, the Emperor of Austria, concurring in the ideas expressed in the Emperor Napoleon's letter of the 11th June to his Minister for Foreign Affairs, cedes Venetia to the French Emperor, and accepts his mediation for the conclusion of peace between the belligerents. The Emperor Napoleon hastened to respond to this summons, and immediately communicated with the King of Prussia and Italy, in order to obtain an armistice."

That this armistice may result in a lengthened peace is the hope and desire of Europe, and that the Emperor of the French will transfer Venetia to Italy there is little doubt, but Austria, although humbled, is not destroyed. Prussia will have to be "settled" with, and France may want a little territorial commission for her trouble, to say nothing of the claims of the many smaller sovereignties—upon the whole, we cannot but regard the present state of affairs but as a complication that may unhappily require more bloodshed before the peace of Europe can be permanently arranged.

ELSIE MUIR.

To save his life, Reuben Dunnington could not tell which of the two girls he liked the best. Janie Rea was his cousin, and it had always been the understanding that some day they two should marry.

Janie was pretty, there was no denying that; a sort of good prettiness it was, that made folks like to look at her, to be near her. Her eyes were large and softly blue, her hair wavy and brown, her cheeks rosy, her lips red and smiling; she had a round, comely form.

Yes, Janie was pretty, and undoubtedly would make Reuben an excellent wife, if he had the sense to stand by the tacit agreement entered into so long now.

But—alas, that there should be a but, but there was—if Janie was pretty, Elsie Muir was lovely, and she had such splendid, great, bawling black eyes, such black shining curls, such an arch, enticing smile—her eyelashes were so long, her voice so sweet, her waist so slender; besides she administered constantly small doses of a flattery the sweetest of all to man.

She let him see that she liked him, acted out her liking in a frank, childish, impulsive way that was half its charm and blinded Janie by its very frankness.

Janie and she were like sisters. Janie was the older, not so much by years as by experience, and that rustic health which made her such a contrast to the delicate and almost ethereal loveliness of Elsie.

Janie had been like an elder sister to Elsie from that night of the wreck twelve years ago, when Reuben had picked Elsie off the sands, wet, shivering, almost dead with terror, the sole life left of all those the doomed ship had held.

Janie had been like an elder sister to her, I say, more like a mother indeed—warning, cherishing, petting her, ready to give up everything to her, except perhaps Reuben, and Elsie knew what the understanding was between Janie and Reuben; at least she ought to have known. Nothing had ever been spoken definitely, to be sure; but then she must have known, if she did not wilfully remain unconscious.

But, truth to tell, Elsie was given to wilfulness upon occasion; she had been used to having what she wanted, they all indulged her so. Hers was a soft, pleasure-loving nature, affectionate in impulse, but untaught and unused to denying self.

Elsie was too lovely and enticing, too naturally a coquette, not to have plenty of beaux—beaux who were madly in love with her too, but at whom she either laughed when they became too much in earnest, or cunningly coaxed brother Reuben to send them away for her.

Reuben usually performed his share of the business effectually, to say the least—so effectually that it pretty soon began to be whispered that Reuben Dunnington meant to marry Elsie himself.

They were all three standing together at a little social gathering one evening, Elsie, Janie and Reuben, when some such remark was made in their hearing. The speaker, quite unconscious of their vicinity, and being a rejected suitor, delivered himself very freely on the subject, and all three heard him distinctly. Janie was beginning to laugh, when, chancing to glance at Elsie and Reuben, something in the look of both struck the glow from her cheek and the warmth from her heart.

With a half exclamation she dropped her lover's

arm, and stood looking from one to the other in a pale agony of questioning.

Neither Elsie nor Reuben could meet that look boldly, both were momentarily confused; he so much so, that muttering something about wanting to speak to some one at the farther side of the room, he abruptly went away, and left the two girls standing there together.

Elsie stood a minute with her long lashes drooping; she felt guilty in spite of herself under that look; but she was of too light a nature to really regret, and too natural a tactician to suffer mere embarrassment to conquer her. She looked up presently with something like her usual bright archness, and laughed musically. "You and I don't care what folks say, do we, Janie?" she said, lightly.

Janie tried to laugh, and to say no; but the laugh was forced, the monosyllable inaudible. Just then someone asked Elsie to dance, and glad of any excuse to get away, she went.

Janie Rea turned her face to the window and the dark night, and stood looking out. Not the remotest thought had ever glanced across her till this moment that Elsie and Reuben might love each other. She saw it now plain enough. How could they help it? Elsie was prettier than she; she had always been proud of Elsie's loveliness, and of course Reuben had eyes and sensibilities as well as other people. Was it strange when half the country side was raving about her that Reuben, who saw her so much oftener than they, should love her too?

"Janie, dear, why ain't you dancing?"

It was Reuben, come back, and standing there with a half-penitential look in his grey eyes, and something more than kindness in his tone. Was it love?

For the first time in her life she asked herself this question.

"Nobody has asked me lately," she said, evasively, avoiding his eyes.

"Dance with me; there is a place waiting for us now. Will you come?"

"No, Reuben," without looking round. "I—I want you to tell me if—if what that man said was true. Do you like Elsie—enough, I mean, to—to want to marry her?"

There—it was out now. Janie Rea was a plain, straightforward, courageous girl. She felt it was better they should all understand each other at once.

Reuben coloured up to his eyes, and looked at her furtively. He saw how white her face was. He knew that Janie Rea had expected all her life to be his wife. He hadn't her courage; and though it made his breath come quick to see Elsie's waist encircled by another's arm, he wasn't prepared to cancel that understood troth between him and Janie, and say that he wanted to marry Elsie instead of her.

That element of goodness which was Janie's distinguishing characteristic, had taken fast hold of all that was best in Reuben Dunnington's nature. He could not so easily read it away, and take in its place that volatile, intoxicating Elsie.

"I—I never thought of marrying Elsie," he stammered at last. "You know that, Janie. You know what the understanding has been."

A faint flush stained the girl's cheek.

"Understanding or no understanding," she said, impatiently, "what's past has nothing to do with you to-night. And what I want to know is, if you and I had no past at all, would you ask Elsie to—be your wife?"

He stole another furtive look at her.

"I—don't think I should, Janie."

"Think—tush! it's not like you to give a straightforward answer to anything. You're too fond of beating about the bush, Reuben Dunnington, and I like plain talk myself. There is Elsie coming here. Go and keep her away from me just now; it's as little as you can do."

Poor Janie's cheeks were flushed enough now, and her usually soft eyes were bright with anger; for, after all, her's was a hot temper when you roused it.

Reuben could not choose but do as she bade him, and she kept away from both him and Elsie all the rest of the evening.

She was very unlike her usual gentle, retiring self, and laughed and talked and danced with any and every one. Reuben couldn't help watching her anxiously.

Elsie let some one else take her home early, and Reuben waited for Janie, who showed no inclination to depart until all the rest had gone.

Then she would not look at her lover, or take his arm, or so much as let him support her when they came to that part of the path which led over the rocks to the lighthouse, and was considered unsafe in broad day. There was another and safer route that they might have taken, but Janie seemed to have changed natures with Elsie this night, and wilfully chose the dangerous path.

When the tide was up the waters covered these rocks, and left them slippery when they retired. Some-

where midway, as she flitted on, Janie's foot slipped. Reuben missed her a moment in the darkness, sprang forward, and found she had indeed vanished.

"Janie!" he called, frantically, at the top of his voice, but there was no answer, and they were so close under the shadow of the lighthouse walls that he could see nothing.

"Janie," he called again, "answer me, in the name of mercy. It is you I love—you only."

"I am here, Reuben," said a weak voice below him. She was clinging there, trying to climb up herself; but for that fervent adjuration of his, that too dear assurance, she might have persisted in silence, till the waves swept her away into the deep.

But his strong arm was soon round her now; he lifted her from the water and held her fast, his recovered treasure; he was actually trembling at the thought of how nearly he had lost her, and Janie was ready to cry with joy at having secured such assurance of his affection, even at that risk.

He did not let her slip again, and at the door, just before she entered the house, he repeated what he had said about loving her, and made her kiss him before he would let her go.

"I couldn't sleep without speaking to you, Reuben, and I heard what you said to Janie, and—you didn't quite mean it, did you, Reuben—not all; you care for Elsie a little, don't you?"

She was such a childish little thing. She had such a piteously sweet little face just then; her great black eyes shone at him with such entreating lustre.

"I know you do like me a little," Elsie whispered.

"Too much, little one—too much, I'm afraid," Reuben said, bending his head and whispering also.

At that Elsie began to cry, and somehow, in soothing her, her velvet cheeks came against his lips, and he kissed her.

The next moment he shrank guiltily, for as he lifted his head, there, in the moonlight, not three feet from them, stood Janie, pale as a ghost, and holding an open letter in her hand.

It was not the first time he had kissed Elsie, to be sure, but somehow this kiss seemed to have a different significance from any that had gone before.

"I have been looking for you, Elsie," Janie said, coming forward. "Uncle Ralph and Auntie have been sitting up for you; they did not know that you had come home."

Elsie turned towards her eagerly, curiosity overcoming all other emotions. She knew that some inquiries had been going on of late concerning her parentage, and she had caught sight of the open letter in Janie's hand.

"Yes," said Janie, without looking at Reuben, "we have got news at last, and we are likely to lose you, dear. Your uncle has written to acknowledge you, and may be here himself to claim you any day."

Elsie gave a little gasp and leaned against Reuben as though she were going to faint. It was all so sudden and strange.

"How could you?" exclaimed Reuben, reproachfully. "You should not have told her so abruptly."

Janie stifled a sigh.

"Your uncle is very rich, Elsie," she continued. "You will have such a fine house to live in, and such silks and jewellery, you will not miss us."

"How can you say so?" exclaimed Reuben, again. "It is not true that you will forget us so easily, Elsie."

It was easy to see how agitated he was at the thought of losing her. He scarcely seemed to know that Janie was there, as he bent carelessly over Elsie, who still clung to him.

It was too much. That angry flame which had burned on Janie's cheek once before that evening leaped up again now.

"Ask her to marry you, Reuben," she said, hotly. "You might as well; only you needn't have troubled yourself to say such wicked untruths to me as you did within the hour."

Reuben could not answer. Shamed as he felt, his very soul was sick at thought of losing Elsie. Janie lingered a moment.

"Don't let anything that has been between us hinder you, Reuben," she went on. "I give you back all you ever pretended to give me; and right glad am I to be rid of anything so false."

And so she went in, and they too followed her—Elsie without having spoken, Reuben in a half-dreamed dream of happiness, at thought of being free to love Elsie, and keep her always with him.

They were a constrained household for the next few days. Even Elsie was silent and reserved, and avoided Reuben.

And then the uncle came—a grand, stately gentleman, who was immensely charmed with Elsie, and patronizing to her kind friends—those who had been parents and brother and sister to her so long. He brought Elsie such quantities of fine things as fairly took away her breath. She was French, it turned out, so she came honestly by her love of finery.

She was shyer than ever of Reuben after her uncle came; and when her uncle talked of the beautiful world he was going to take her to, the gay life she should live, and urged immediate departure, she remonstrated but faintly.

She went away so willingly at last, though she did cry a little, that the left a chilled sensation behind her in those hearts that had been so kind to her so long. It was a blow to Reuben—a rude shock, this being forced to see his idol so faulty; but he recovered in time, made it up once more with Janie, and they were married very shortly.

After all, as she was a great deal better suited to him, and they were happy, till one day, when Elsie had been away six years without so much as coming to see them once, they got news that she was coming at last.

She had married in the interval, and lost her husband, and was a widow now, with a little boy three years old.

Janie tried to be glad she was coming, and resolutely put down any foreboding that rose, but she could not quite forget.

Elsie had changed, but it was only to a more charming edition of her old self. Janie felt, before she had been at the lighthouse a week, that she was more dangerous now than ever.

Her mourning became her exceedingly, and the little pensiveness natural under the circumstances only made her still more interesting. There was the old softness and elusive witchery of manner, the old childish abandon to the impulse of the moment, the old wilfulness, and claim for indulgence, the same frank, coaxing affectionateness that had made her so dear to Janie as well as Reuben in those old days.

But now, Janie, while she felt its charm, could not forget how frail that affection had proved; leaving them so easily—seeming to forget as readily. Women remember such things better than men.

Reuben seemed to have forgotten even the bitter pang she had caused him in going away so. He and Elsie lived over the old times in a pretty, fanciful fashion that might have been very pleasant to them, but was anything else to Janie.

Mrs. Reuben Dunnington was a good, sensible woman, handsome in her way, but guiltless of trickeries of eye and voice, or any of those indescribable witcheries that belonged to Elsie.

She was good-natured and sensible, and believed in her husband's affection and faithfulness, but to save her life she could not help being jealous, and—showing it.

The first quarrel that had ever disturbed her married life was the consequence.

She and Reuben scarce spoke for more than a week, though he and Elsie were friendlier than ever.

Elsie was always fond of boating, and they used to spend hours upon the water in calm weather, Janie refusing to accompany them, and looking after them in bitterness of spirit.

Then there were long moonlight evenings in which they sat outside, oblivious of her, though she was so near, or she would catch from the beacon-tower above the sound of their voices mingled in laughter or song.

Poor Janie. She grew thin and pale in her wretchedness. Often she was tempted to wish that she had died that night when she slipped on the rocks, and came so near drowning.

Whatever else Elsie was, she was a fond mother. Her little boy, Louis, was the object of the wildest idolatry. She fretted if he was out of her sight a moment, and if she missed him two minutes, she was in agonies for fear he was drowned.

He was a frolicsome little rogue, too, and his nurse had her hands full to keep him out of danger. One day the nurse was away, and Louis and his mamma were having a nap. Louis waked first, and stole away without waking Elsie. Somehow he eluded everybody else, too, and got outside.

Janie saw him from an upper window, climbing down those very rocks she remembered so well, rambling on with baby fearlessness, unconscious of the awful peril he was in.

He seemed to know he was in forbidden places, however, and kept looking back to see if anyone were coming after him. There was scarce possibility of reaching him in time. Janie felt inwardly what the end must be, and Reuben was away, and Elsie worse than nobody.

Suddenly she thought of the boat. It was rocking on the water down there, and she could row almost as well as Reuben. It was much the shortest way to the child, and if he lost his footing there would be more chance of saving him.

Scarcely breathing in her haste, she hurried down, and loosing the boat from its moorings, got in. A few swift strokes brought her in sight of Louis, safe yet. But just then his mother's screams rent the air. He heard her, and in his fright put his little foot on space instead of stone, and fell.

Janie was beside him when he rose to the surface.

It was not much to lift him into the boat; but she had saved his life, and as she rowed back to a safer landing, she could not help wondering how Elsie would take her boy's life from her hands.

She came fluttering down to meet him, frantic with gratitude and joy, and hanging upon Janie's neck in an ecstasy of thanksgiving, which Janie accepted but coldly.

"If you are really grateful," she said, bluntly, "you know how you can prove it to me."

For once, Elsie did not elude Janie's gravity with a laugh, or pretend to misunderstand. She coloured transiently.

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "and I will."

That evening she announced her departure for the following day, and when it came, went. Only Janie suspected why she went so suddenly.

As for Reuben, though he was not proof against her witchery while she stayed, I think he was glad when she was really gone, and his peace made with Janie once more.

C. C.

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH.

Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman and her Master," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LV.

Peace, thy olive wand extend,
And bid wild war his ravage end,
Man with brother man to meet,
And as brother kindly greet.

Burns.

ALL the following day the British army remained upon the field, doubtful whether Soul might not renew the contest. But the French Marshal had no inclination to tempt fortune by a renewal of the battle: during the night he retired from Toulouse and retreated to Villefranche, with the loss of only one hundred men—a circumstance which proves how skillfully his march had been conducted. Toulouse, now exposed to the fire of the allies, at once opened its gates to receive the conquerors. A great number of its inhabitants, faithful to the traditions of their fathers and their loyalty to the Bourbons, received them with mingled joy and sorrow—joy at the prospect of the restoration of their exiled king, and sorrow for the humiliation of their country.

The civic authorities and most of the elder citizens had mounted the white cockade. The tri-colour on the public edifices had been replaced by the *fleur-de-lys* drapery. The change, as far as the picturesque is concerned, was anything but a favourable one. The few unconverted republicans and furious Bonapartists who remained within the walls sarcastically declared that it looked very like a dirty-white table-cloth; and we remember to have made the same observation when a boy, the first time he beheld it floating over the Tuilleries, in eighteen hundred and twenty-nine.

As regiment after regiment entered the city, the partisans of the Bourbons showed themselves more freely. Those who a few hours previously, in speaking of Napoleon, had prudently observed that his imperial majesty had been unfortunate, now unhesitatingly declared that the *tyrant* was overthrown. The loyalty to the exiled race spread like an epidemic.

Although the hour was late before Clement was relieved from the duties of his regiment, he determined to devote the greater portion of the night to a visit to the Chateau Vert—he felt anxious to ascertain the fate of its inmates. At night, when tired and wounded on the battle-field, the image of Louise had haunted him: he had seen her in his dreams, and the vision had brought consolation to him; he felt that he could no longer deceive himself as to the state of his heart: he loved, and longed to win from the lips of the fair girl whom accident had thrown so strangely in his path an avowal that he was not indifferent to her.

It was a lovely moonlight night, when, accompanied by his faithful George, our hero passed the gates of Toulouse and took the road to the village of Moulblanc, which lay between him and the residence of Madame Krudner and Louise.

When within a mile of the Chateau Vert, Clement Foster and his companion were encountered by a patrol of the provost marshal's guard. The officer who commanded it informed them that the soldier who had been arrested for robbing the body of Colonel Harrington, and relating the orders of Trevelyan and Marshall, had escaped on the eve of the battle, and was supposed to be concealed either in the mansion or its environs. Our hero heard the intelligence with secret satisfaction—for he had not forgotten the hastily-written note of Louise, or the opinion it expressed of Dauncan's innocence.

Whilst they were still speaking on the subject, George called the attention of his master to a strong column of red light which rose suddenly from the opposite side of the wood, in the direction of the chateau. There was no other building near of suffi-

cient consequence from which such a body of fire could proceed.

With a groan of agony and terror, our hero gave his horse the spur, and dashed like a madman down the road, his heart oppressed by forebodings of danger to the object of his affection—for he could no longer disguise from himself the fact, that the fair English girl whom he had encountered under such singular circumstances had won his love.

The rest of the party followed.

When they reached the lawn in front of the chateau, they found a group of peasants watching the progress of the flames, which by this time had enveloped the entire building. It had evidently been fired in several directions, for flames were pouring from the windows of both wings. The cracking of the walls and fall of the massive beams which supported the floors showed that all hope of saving the mansion was at an end.

"Where are the ladies?" demanded Clement, in a hoarse voice, of one of the apocryphs.

The man pointed, with a despairing look, to the burning pile.

The young officer threw himself from his horse, and rushed towards the principal entrance: vainly he essayed to enter—thick volumes of suffocating smoke and flames drove him back. In his despair, he fancied that he heard the voice of Louise calling on him by name for aid: a second time he would have made the attempt, and most probably have lost his life, had not his faithful servant George thrown his arms around him and restrained him.

"For heaven's sake," exclaimed the affectionate fellow, "do not attempt it! No living thing could penetrate the fiery barrier! Think of your poor father—of the friends who love you! Doubtless the inmates have escaped!"

The name of his father was the only consideration which at that moment could have checked the desperate resolution of our hero: he knew how dearly the old man loved him—that his very life depended upon his. With a groan of anguish which proved how deep a pang the effort cost him, he gave way, and permitted the speaker to lead him from the façade of the mansion.

"There has been treachery here!" exclaimed the officer who commanded the guard of the provost marshal; "the fire is not the result of accident!"

Several of the peasants declared that it was the work of the English. One even went so far as to state that just before the flames broke forth, he had encountered two officers in the wood, coming in the direction leading from the house: an accusation which the officer considered so improbable, that he refused to listen to it.

Overwhelmed by the excess of his grief, Clement Foster had thrown himself upon the ground.

"Leave me!" he said, as his faithful follower vainly attempted to console him; "my dream of life is over—its hope has perished in your burning pile! Dead—Dead!" he repeated, "in the pride of youth and beauty! Dead, without knowing how deeply she was loved—and my heart, like hers, is ashes now—never to feel one throb of joy again!"

Although he placed but little reliance in the words he uttered, George repeatedly assured him that there still was hope.

"Hope!" uttered a deep voice near them.

Our hero started to his feet as if he had received an electric shock. There was a slight rustling in the underwood which separated them from a narrow dell in the neighbouring wood. Both the young men searched it eagerly, but could discover no trace of the speaker. Just as they were about to abandon the search, the roof of the Chateau Vert fell in, and a volume of flame far more intense than any which had preceded it shot like a meteor into the heavens, illuminating the surrounding country to a considerable distance, and rendering even the minutest object distinctly visible.

The servant grasped the arm of his master, and pointed to what appeared to be a human body, with a dark mantle or cloak thrown over it. It was placed upon the rise of a gently sloping bank. Our hero sprang towards it with desperate resolution, and snatched aside the covering. It was the corpse of Colonel Harrington, which some pious hand had carried from the fiery tomb which threatened to consume it.

"Did I not tell you, sir, that there was hope?" exclaimed the ex-gamekeeper of Briery Grange; "if the dead have been removed, surely the living have escaped!"

As Clement Foster stood contemplating the pale, placid features of the corpse, his despair gradually gave way to a feeling of hopefulness. His heart was relieved of more than half its sorrow. The presence of the dead in that lone spot appeared to him as a pledge of safety to the living.

"You are right, George!" he said, with a deep-drawn sigh; "I have still something to trust and live for!"

Slowly he retraced his way to the lawn in front of the smoking ruins, to inform his brother officer of the discovery he had made.

On the following morning, the remains of Colonel Harrington were consigned to a soldier's grave.

Shortly after the events we have described, Soult, who had received authentic information of the abdication of his imperial master, concluded an amnesty with Wellington, and the British army entered Paris.

It was a mortifying sight to the Parisians to witness the encampment of an enemy in the very heart of their city, which they had so long been accustomed to consider as the capital, not only of Europe, but of the world. The presence of Louis XVIII. at the Tuilleries was but a poor consolation for such a humiliation.

At every halting-place of his regiment on its march to Paris, Clement and his servant made inquiries after the baroness and Louise, but could learn nothing satisfactory. A hundred carriages had passed—some with ladies, others with wounded officers—many containing both; each response alternately excited his hopes and fears. Colonel Barratt—who, on hearing of the death of his nephew, had assumed the title of Lord Peapod—more than once sarcastically observed that Captain Foster was dreaming, so different did he appear from his former self; whilst Walter Trevelyan and Marshall rejoiced at his despondency, of which they too well knew the cause.

Never had the capital of our Gallic neighbours appeared more gay: amusement is necessary to a Frenchman's existence. That home-life where all enjoyment is centred in the domestic circle would appear strange and unnatural to him; he lives upon emotions, which, like highly-seasoned diet, quickly wear him out. National enmity is the inevitable precursor of a revolution, in which your true Parisian recovers his spirits and health again.

Our hero had been about a week in Paris, when one morning, as he was returning from parade, he found George engaged in a warm dispute with a dapper little Frenchman, who kept assuring him, with a multiplicity of bows and grimaces, that he was *en desespoir* at being compelled to refuse—but he could only part with the letter to Monsieur le Capitaine; adding that he would call again.

All this was heathen Greek to the ex-gamekeeper, who, with true English tenacity, refused to let the commissionaire depart till the return of his master.

At the word "letter," Clement instantly interfered, and eagerly assured the man that he was the party alluded to.

"Le Capitaine Foster?" said the Frenchman, doubtfully.

"Of course it is the captain!" exclaimed George, impatiently; "what does he mean?" he added, turning with a despairing look to our hero; "he has been jabbering this half-hour, and the only word I can make out is letter—letter!"

Convinced at last that he was right, the dapper little Parisian presented the missive with the air of a marquis—a French one, of course—and stood in a most unexceptionable attitude whilst the officer perused it—which did not take him many minutes—for it contained only the following words, written in a round, clerk-like hand:

"Captain Foster is requested to present himself at eight this evening, at the Hotel of the Swedish ambassador, and inquire for the secretary!"

It had neither date nor signature.

Clement eagerly asked for a description of the lady who sent him.

"Ladi!" repeated the messenger, with an indescribable shrug. *Mon Dieu!* for a lady, she had very fine moustachios—and such whiskers!

It appeared that the letter had been given him by one of the attachés of the embassy; and, aware of the character for liberality which the English officers had already acquired, he had insisted upon delivering it to him in person. He was not disappointed in his calculations—for our hero threw him a five-franc piece, and entered his quarters to muse over the singular invitation he had just received.

"Swedish Embassy!" he repeated several times to himself, in a tone of disappointment—for he was ignorant that Madame Krudner was the wife of Bernadotte's minister; "who can possibly desire to see me at the Hotel of the Embassy?"

Although the hope of gaining intelligence of the being dearest to his heart was daily becoming fainter, he was punctual to the hour indicated in the letter. In the tall, moustachioed gentleman who received him our hero recognised the messenger's description of the person who had employed him.

"Captain Foster?" observed the full-fledged diplomat; "yes—quite correct: the invitation was intended for you, and no other! In an instant I am at your service!"

Ringing a bell, he gave the card he had just received to a page who answered it: the boy motioned our hero and the secretary to follow him.

They were conducted to a room in which a lady and

a tall, handsome man, in military uniform, were seated: in the first he recognized the mysterious baroness of the Chateau Vert, and in the latter, no less a personage than the Emperor of Russia.

The visitor drew back with mingled respect and surprise.

"Approach!" said the baroness, smiling; "but before I offer you my thanks, permit me, sire, to present to your Imperial Majesty the young officer to whose services on a late occasion I was so deeply indebted!"

Alexander bowed most graciously; and, as he rose to depart, assured Clement that his gallantry should not be forgotten.

Little did our hero reckon on the promise thus flatteringly held out to him. His thoughts were of Louise. The instant he found himself alone with Madame Krudner, he besought her to relieve his anxiety, by informing him if she, too, had escaped from the chateau previous to the conscription.

"Do you think I could have abandoned her?" replied the ambassador, in a reproachful tone; "she has been to me like a child! It is impossible to know and not to love her! Louise is well, and will be rejoiced to see you once more in safety! I told the foolish, anxious girl, she added, 'that the star of your destiny was rising—that you were not doomed to die upon the red field of slaughter! But she doubted: when the heart fears, it is so difficult to dissipate its terrors!'"

These few words gave intense delight to the young soldier. Although in all probability the speaker was perfectly unconscious of the construction which he placed upon them, they proved to him that in his absence he had been remembered—and the conviction caused his heart to bound with joy.

A deep blush suffused the delicate cheek of the fair girl as she entered the room and recognized our hero. She felt vexed with herself for the embarrassment her manner betrayed, and which her ignorance of the wiles and tact of her sex rendered her unable to repress. Her first impulse was to extend her hand; the next instant she half regretted what she feared might be construed into weakness. But before she could withdraw it, it was clasped with a gentle pressure in that of Clement Foster, and raised respectfully to his lips.

A few moments elapsed before either of them could speak. Madame Krudner took no heed of their embarrassment—such feelings had long been a stranger to her.

"Explain to our friend," she said, "all that it is necessary he should learn!"

With this observation, she began to occupy herself with her papers.

Not one word of love passed between the two youthful beings whose hearts were overflowing with its sympathies—and yet they understood each other as perfectly as if a mutual confession of the tender passion had taken place between them; for where the eyes are eloquent, the tongue may be spared its task.

When Clement related the fall of his unfortunate friend Lord Peapod, he observed with surprise that Louise, far from expressing the least regret, listened to his narrative with a want of feeling that pained him. Nay, there was something very like a smile upon her lips; but when he described his own distress on discovering the chateau in flames, the terror and despair which haunted him, his anxiety for her safety, and how singularly it had been relieved, the almost joyous expression of her countenance changed like a sunny landscape overcast by some dark, threatening cloud, and tears dimmed the clear azure of her eyes.

"The body of the colonel," she said, "must have been removed by his faithful servant, the poor soldier in whose behalf I ventured to entreat your intercession. After his escape he sought refuge at the chateau! Madame la Baronne would have brought him to Paris with us—but he insisted on remaining to guard the corpse of his gallant master! Madame yielded, knowing that no danger would occur to him."

"And do you believe in her predictions?" demanded Clement, with surprise.

"Some of them!" replied Louise, with a blush yet deeper than the first.

The young soldier was puzzled to account for her confusion, but forbore to question her.

We, however, will not permit our readers to remain in a state of ungratified curiosity: the real or pretended prophetic had foretold that she was to become his wife. The question, therefore, was rather an embarrassing one, and was answered, accordingly, with maidenly discretion.

"Come," said Louise, "I have a friend I am anxious to introduce you to—one whom I feel certain you will be rejoiced to see!"

Secretly wondering who this friend could possibly be, our hero followed his conductress from the grand saloon to a chamber situated in a distant part of the mansion. Its arrangements indicated that it was occupied by an invalid

In an easy chair, directly opposite the fireplace, was seated a gentleman, wrapped in a loose dressing-gown, evidently the object of so much care.

"Is he come?" demanded the sick man, in a voice which sent the blood from the cheek of Clement—for he imagined that he recognized an old, familiar voice, which he had every reason to believe had been hushed for ever in the Battle of Toulouse.

"Captain Foster can answer for himself!" replied Louise.

With some difficulty the invalid turned in his easy chair, and displayed the well-known but pale features of Peapod.

The soldier who had removed him from the field was no other than Duncan, the faithful orderly of Colonel Harrington.

"She is an angel!" observed his lordship, in speaking of the kindness he had received from our heroine, after he had explained the particulars of his escape, and the departure of Louise from the room. "You had better propose at once; for, on my soul, I am more than half inclined to do so already!"

That same evening his friend followed his advice. The fair girl candidly confessed that the sentiment was mutual; but added, with a sigh, "that she would not permit him to bind himself by any engagement!"

It was in vain that her lover entreated her to explain the cause of so singular a request.

The only answer he could elicit from her was, that she had a task to perform to which she was pledged by every feeling of gratitude and duty. That accomplished, if he then thought her worthy of his love, with joy she would consent to be his.

The abdication and retirement of Bonaparte to the Island of Elba—which was ceded to him in full sovereignty—gave to Europe a temporary peace, deceitful as the calm which precedes the tempest's breath—hollow as the crater of the volcano, beneath whose crust the smouldering fires still burn, threatening an eruption.

Never had London appeared more gay. The long-desolate hearth of many an English home was rejoiced by the return of the absent soldier; honours and rewards were profusely distributed; the entire nation appeared intoxicated with joy; and, to crown the excitement of the period, the allied sovereigns, accompanied by a train of the most distinguished warriors and diplomatists, arrived on a visit to the Prince Regent—a just homage paid to the perseverance and disinterested spirit in which England had conducted and concluded the war, the treasure she had lavished, and the yet more precious blood that had been spilled.

The opera season promised to be the most brilliant ever known. Mademoiselle Cherini—the Syren of Europe, as she was generally termed—had been engaged by the directors at an enormous salary—for since the retirement of Madame Garrachi from the stage, no one had been found capable of disputing the empire of the lyric scene with that still fascinating but unprincipled woman, whose reign was a perfect despotism. Managers crouched to her caprices, and the public were scarcely less submissive. Frequently had she been known to keep an audience waiting, and sometimes disappoint them under pretence of indisposition.

Both directors and public bore with her—for the simple reason, that there was no one to replace her. Talk of tyrants—the greatest tyrant in the world is the favourite artiste of a theatre: the airs they give themselves would be amusing if they were not insulting.

Frequently had Signor Garrachi—for the *Union* still continued—warned her that she would try the patience of the public once too often. Mademoiselle Cherini replied only by a disdainful smile, and, confident in her power, continued her career of folly and caprice.

Bitterly had the speculative Italian rued the result of her infatuation—for the designing woman had played her cards much more successfully than her dupe. Under various pretexts, that portion of his wife's fortune which the signor had secured was borrowed and dissipated in extravagance, till she held him completely in her power. He was her slave—and the chain which bound him was the degrading one of dependence. He was compelled to feign a passion he no longer felt—to suffer all the agonies of suspense at each fresh flirtation of his capricious tyrant: not that his affection was alarmed, but his interests.

The principal object of his jealousy was a Russian baron, named Stollehoff, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, whose attentions were most persevering. Unlike most of her lovers, the handsome Russ talked of marriage. The idea of becoming a baroness flattered the vanity of Mademoiselle Cherini, whose charms were already on the wane. Her cupidity, also, was excited by the account her lover gave of his vast possessions, his serfs, his palaces in Moscow and St. Petersburg; and she began to reflect seriously on the prudence of concluding her brilliant career by a yet more brilliant union with her wealthy admirer, to

attain which there was but one difficulty to surmount—the consent of the Emperor was necessary.

Amongst the regiments which returned to England was that of Clement Foster. At the urgent entreaty of Lord Peapod, our hero had carefully concealed the fact of his miraculous escape from the hand of his assassin.

"Let him," said the good-natured peer, speaking of his uncle, "enjoy his imaginary honours for awhile—his punishment will be the more complete!"

Although the friends had never exchanged confidence on the subject of Peter's treachery, it was evident from these few words that their suspicions were the same. From a feeling of family pride, his lordship did not choose, probably, to speak more plainly upon the subject; but it was evident that it pressed painfully upon his mind, and had destroyed the little that remained of affection for the relative who had shared his fortune like a brother.

Those who have long been absent from the parent whom they venerate and love, can imagine the impatience with which our hero hastened to the home of his youth, to receive, as he fondly imagined, the blessing and welcome of his father. He had won honour in the wars—his name had been mentioned with distinction in the despatches of the great commander. He had every reason to anticipate that he would be proudly, fondly received.

(To be continued.)

THE SUMMER OF THE HEART.

THE heart of summer was pulsating with its fullest tide of life-blood, in the bosom of Maud Longfellow. Her cheek and lip were red with damask stain of rose-bloom; the blue of azure skies was in her dreamy eye; the curling tendrils of leafy vines were in her luxuriant, glossy hair; and her voice was drowsy with the murmur of the droning sea.

And yet, amid all this opulence of warmth, bloom, and repose, the life of Maud was strangely cold and dreary.

When spring had come to thrill other pulses, and awaken them, alike with nature's, out of their sluggish winter torpor, no resurrection came to Maud's; nor could the growth of the beautiful summer time diffuse a glow through her being.

Four years before, all that was warming and vivifying had been crushed within her heart; and, since that time, she had walked along a sterile, monotonously dreary path, in which no springing violet or blooming rose refreshed her eye, nor summer bird enchanted her ear, nor tropic south wind lapped her senses in its spell.

We do not customarily bestow a great amount of pity upon those who, of their own free will, shut the gate on pleasant pathways, and turn, instead, into bleak and sterile ones—more especially if chill pride stands on her pedestal under the lintel of the gateway, and points, with stern finger, to the sacrifice.

But Maud Longfellow had some shadow of excuse for her mistake, reared as she had been from earliest childhood, surrounded by influences that guarded her, vestal-like, within the temple: alas! that exclusiveness was the shrine on which she was bound, heart and soul, by her haughty sire, who stood high-priest at the altar!

No hint of common worldly contact had ever come to her in her stately home, almost as ancient, in its two-century-old inheritance, as some feudal castle; and the blood of the Longfellows had been kept unsoiled from muddy plebeian mixture all those two centuries, by intermarriages only with blood as patrician as its own.

But blood may grow thin and cold in two hundred years, and it needs the infusion of thicker tides to prevent it from turning pale and watery; and I have sometimes thought that Maud Longfellow's must have caught a foreign strain into that which circled through her delicate veins than descended from her long line of patrician sires, else she had never stooped from her high throne of pride to bestow a second thought on Albion Reeves—the young engineer and surveyor—who came down to drain the new roads and rustic bridges on the borders of her father's broad estate.

From the first time when she saw him in the library, sitting with her father at the oaken table, busy with his maps and charts, and surveying instruments—from that time, when Albion Reeves acknowledged the carelessly-given introduction to his employer's high-bred daughter with as much *empressment* in his bow as any of her wealthy suitors, his face haunted her. What business had he, who was little more than a mechanic, with such splendid physical beauty? His figure was the model of a Greek athlete's; his head crowned the superb column of neck that rose from his broad shoulders like that of Antinous; and his brow was as magnificently developed as a statesman's. Sitting in her own boudoir, or receiving guests in her sumptuous parlours—walking, riding, or in her dreams

—Maud Longfellow could not get that man's face and figure out of her thoughts. He looked a nobleman; but nature had placed him in a humbler sphere.

His splendid physique was the first cause of Maud's interest; but I know that she was too thoroughly ingrained with her cultivated patrician pride not to have crushed down all thoughts of Albion Reeves, had not a circumstance occurred to bring their minds and tastes into finer contact.

One day, Maud's horse, supposed by all entirely broken to the saddle, took it into his head to show no distinction to the Longfellow race; or at least to assert his own royal contempt of restraint, spurned the control of his patrician rider, reared and threw her, almost dead, just across the path of the young engineer, in a new road he was constructing on the outer edge of the Longfellow estate.

As he was, in soiled coat, and boots muddy with contact with mother earth, Albion Reeves bore the lady to a green bank; brought water from a spring hard by, and bathed her creamy forehead and blue-veined wrists; and almost gave a sigh, when he saw the pink flush of life creep back into the cheek and lips of the beautiful wail the fates had flung so suddenly across his path, since he must now resign her. But he faithfully wrought her restoration; then lifted her gently into the saddle of the animal, who now came back with drooping head and docile eye, and led her slowly home to the mansion on the elm-crowned hill.

To suppose that Ralph Longfellow would prove ungrateful to the brave young fellow who had brought about the recovery of his only daughter from that deep swoon, would be to say that he was destitute of the attributes of his courteous, high-bred race; but to state that Maud fell irretrievably and entirely in love with him, would be to confirm the theory that the hearts of women are alike, the world over, despite the teachings of factitious pride.

Had any one accused Maud of this, at that juncture, she would, doubtlessly, have curled her rose-bud lips and dilated her thin nostrils with scorn; had her father even conceived it, a streak of ire would have warmed his calm, cold blood to the livid heat of passion. As it was, the stately old gentleman welcomed the young engineer to the hospitalities of his house; while the girl named her growing fascination by the ordinary title "gratitude," and wove the meshes of the net closer about her whole being. As if only "gratitude" could stain her pale, proud cheek with crimson, or cause the thrill that ran through her heart, when Ralph was by!

Yet do not think, reader, that Maud Longfellow had weakly surrendered her heart to an ordinary man simply because nature had endowed him with a magnificent *personale*. Those who knew Albion Reeves best, spoke of an intellect of the highest order, and royal parts of mind as well as person; and prophesied that, from surveying country roads and building rustic bridges, he would rise to eminence.

And yet he was born only of those oft-quoted "poor, but respectable parents," who could give him no lift in the world beyond their tender love and good wishes when he went out from the home-roof to fight the battle of life.

But to the ambitious youth, with "Excelsior" engraven upon his forehead, there is no such word as "fail;" and so, side by side with toil went study, and the midnight oil was not consumed in vain; and Albion Reeves worked his way upwards, until he had risen from the common, to the master workman, and knew enough of cubes and compasses to direct the laying out of highways all over the land.

Still comparatively he was "only a mechanic;" and when Maud Longfellow awoke to the fact that she loved him—as she did one day—she felt greatly shocked.

True, her heart, mind, and soul, cried out longingly, "He is more than my equal—he is my superior!"

But position, habit, false education, and her inflexible pride, said, "It can never be! I must drive him from my heart! Forget him!"

And so pride and will conquered; and if Maud Longfellow grew paler as she grew colder and stouter, none knew that she suffered from any wound beyond the effects of the one she received in the fall from her horse that day; and if over Albion Reeves's life-sky, which had, of late, been flushed with a warm roseate glow, dropped down a heavy pall, none knew it but himself; or that he lived thenceforth to fight a harder battle than he had ever fought before with fortune or with fate.

And all this which happened not much over four years ago, chilled Maud into an icy statue, and threw a blight over the tropic summer of her heart.

A soft, sweet wind of peace suddenly blew up, scattering the ebon cloud that had for four long, dreary years hung over the land; and the hushed breath of the nation found vent again in a long-drawn sigh of relief and joy.

A great gloom was lifted alike from human hearts and the face of nature; for both had been drear while the lurid star of war hung low in the horizon.

But now all was changed. The heavens cleared till the blue sky shone through; the atmosphere was purified of civil and social contentions; the wheels of society slid back into their old grooves again; and the old order of things was restored.

Hand-in-hand with peace came recreation; and pleasure beckoned to lay aside all cares for a season, and bathe the brow in her poppy-steeped waters.

And surely this is right; for when "the time to weep" has passed, the "time to laugh," whereof the wise man wrote, is come; and gladness entered many a household, whence sorrow, sad guest, had been banished erewhile by sweet-voiced resignation. And, in unison with human rejoicings, earth smiled anew with flowers—her soil washed free of the sanguinary stain of fraternal combat with the baptism of the late April rains; and June came, with her roses and her bluest skies; and the midsummer deepened; and the blue sea sang his songs of joy upon the hard, silver sands.

With the pleasure-tide that swept away the heart-lightened throng to those haunts where "crowds do congregate," Maud Longfellow floated from her inland home to a watering-place.

And yet I think it was more to endeavour to rid herself of that spirit of unrest, which had for the last few years pervaded her, than to mix with the gay world, that she left the quiet of the green country for the babble of the great hotel by the sounding sea. Maud was her own mistress now.

Her stately father had, three years before, yielded to the fiat of that stern conqueror who is no respecter of persons, and gone to sleep among his ancestral Longfellows, with a costly marble obelisk above his breast.

But she was doubly restless and wretched; and the heart of the summer, bringing a wealth of enjoyment, with its balm and bloom, to others, brought no summer glow of life or warmth to her.

But doubly lonely though she was, and possessed with the demon of inquiet, yet ever colder and more reserved in her pale pride grew Maud Longfellow.

At this seaport town the blood of her race proclaimed itself—not in the vulgar blaze of diamonds, or the sheen of costly silks, or in a show of equipages, but in that haughty exclusiveness which hedged her around, save from a chosen few, with a pale more effectual than any barrier any emperor of the Celestial tea-country could ever raise to separate himself from contact with the rude barbarians outside.

It was something, even to the fine gold of talent, intellect, and beauty, who mix ever with the dross in the alchemic of society, to be counted in Miss Longfellow's set; and many an envious pang stirred the breasts of the fashionable *parvenus*, who vainly attempted to climb, on their golden ladders, to the serene heights where this stately woman sat inaccessible enthroned.

And yet, if they could have only known how very lonely that pale, proud woman was, none would have long envied her. But the old grey stone tower in Truro Park guarded not its history more closely than she; while nature, always pitiful for desolation, had draped that in friendly vines and flowers; but not a green tendril curled over the walls of the icy barrier she had reared within her heart.

But Maud Longfellow was not wholly stone or ice; and there were hours when, walking by the sad sea and listening to its moanings, she bitterly repeated the pride which had dwarfed her life, and would gladly have lain it down, with all that deep, strong passion of love, of which natures like hers are capable, at the feet of that man who was her being's only king.

Talk as we may of "suitable matches," and the equality of birth and fortune, they are but outward accidents, and never really decide the fitness of hearts and souls for each other. The only true nobility is that of the intellect; the only true knight-errantry is of the affections; and Albion Reeves, cradled in the humble farmhouse, and nurtured in the stern schools of poverty and privation, was more than the peer of the patrician girl, who had been shielded from the rude breath of the world as carefully as the waxen-leaved camellia within the hothouse walls.

And there by the sad, twilight sea, always solitarily seeking those haunts where none could intrude upon her reveries, all the pride died out of Maud Longfellow's heart; and she bitterly regretted the desolation she had brought upon her life.

It is not always permitted us to retrieve the errors of the past, else many a life that to-day jolts over rough or lonely roads, would slip at once into easier channels; but Heaven was very good to Maud Longfellow. Perhaps He had decreed that she had expiated her mistake by her suffering.

One afternoon, when the sun was sloping to his

western bed, casting a long track of blood-red glow ashward the sea, the girl stood upon the brink of that yawning chasm, known to the frequenters of the town as "Purgatory," whose fissures seam the rocks so deep that a gazer may not look into the black abyss without a shudder of fear.

But, fascinated by the gloomy grandeur of the place, Maud, who had left her carriage at the edge of the sands, and climbed the rocky ramparts alone, stood bending over the edge of the abyss. It was a dangerous locale, for a sudden loss of equipoise, caused by the slipping of a stone, might have hurled her into the chasm; but she knew it not, and lingered with a strange fascination.

On a sudden, a step fell close by her side; and a hand was laid upon her arm, and drew her firmly away from the edge of the chasm.

"Excuse me, madam; but I have been watching you from the beach, and thought you could not be aware of your danger."

Maud Longfellow grew dizzy and faint—not from the recoil caused by the sudden realization of her escape from danger, but because a voice had fallen on her ears which she had never thought to hear again. Albion Reeves stood before her!

One evening, two weeks later, a confession trembled from scarlet lips, as a pair sat in the shadow of the trees of Truro Park, with the white moonlight flinging the long shadow of the old Round Tower, against the sodded turf, almost to their very feet.

"I have planned other roads than the one on your father's estate four years ago," said Reeves. I have followed the armies of my country as an officer of Engineers. If I could only have known that you thought of me, sometimes, dear Maud!"

"Always, Albion, have I done so!" was the reply. "There was no day, struggle as I did to forget you, when you were absent from my thoughts."

"And I always worshipped you as a star in the far-off heavens—too high for my reach," said Reeves, softly.

"But stars fall to earth sometimes," returned the lady, with a smile; "and then they are seen no more by any gazer."

"But you will not disappear thus, meteor-like, from my path? You will walk the long road of life with me, dearest Maud?" asked Reeves, eagerly.

There was no answer in words; but a delicate white hand stole into Albion Reeves's; and the trees whispered overhead; and the shadow of the ivy-draped, flower-garlanded old Round Tower crept nearer, and enveloped them in its folding embrace.

But there were no shadows on their joy that night; for the red blossoms of love had burst into sudden bloom in the sunny, tropical summer of Maud Longfellow's heart.

M. W. J.

FACETIÆ.

A LEVELLER perceiving two crows flying side by side, said, "Ay, that is just how it should be; I hate to see one crow over another."

THEY are fond of titles in the East. Among his other high-sounding titles, the King of Ava has that of "Lord of Twenty-four Umbrellas." This looks as though he had prepared for a long reign!

AN IRISHMAN on being told to grease the waggon, returned in an hour afterwards, and said, "I've greased every part of the waggon but them sticks the wheels hang on!"

A DUTCHMAN carried two mugs to the milkman in place of one, as usual, and being asked the meaning of it, replied, "Dis vor te millich, an' dis for te vater, an' I vill mix tem so as to roote myself."

A FASHIONABLE paper says the female head has become a sort of museum for gold bands, cameos, butterflies and pendulous wreaths which hang under the chin.

A FRENCH writer declares that "There is no way of preventing gambling, and there is no way of putting down swindlers and victims. Were not loaded dice found at Pompeii?"

MRS PARTINGTON remarked the other day that "she had a resentment that she should eventually die in a prison;" adding, "that the resentment troubled her a good deal, but she expected finally to get immured to it."

A NEW "PRECIOUS STONE."—If the following had not actually occurred, it might be considered a good joke. In a town, eight miles from Boston, the pupils of an Orthodox Sabbath School have been accustomed to have given them, at the beginning of a month, a sort of "hunt-and-go-seek" task, the result of which was to be made known at the monthly public meeting of the school. On one occasion they were told to bring in a history of all the women named in the Bible; at another time all the rivers. About a month since they were asked to bring in the names of all the precious

stones. The Sabbath evening, when the result of their investigations was to be made known, at length came, and each boy and girl stood up and gave the names of the precious stones of the Bible. After several had been given, one little fellow was called out. "Well, Thomas, what precious stone have you found?" "Brimstone!" answered the boy. It is needless to say that a number of handkerchiefs were called into requisition to choke down the "depraved human nature" that seemed desirous of manifesting itself in laughter.

WASN'T THAT A PRETTY DISH!

A thousand nightingales have, according to a letter from Vienna, been caught and shipped for Mexico, at the request of the Emperor Maximilian. It is possible that in Austria "nightingale" is a slang equivalent for money, as "canary" was among us? It would seem probable;—for the Emperor's character would incline us to think he cared less about song than notes, and preferred a fill o' money to a philomel.

Sing a song of Max' tricks,
His pockets to o'erflow,
Just a thousand nightingales
Shipped to Mexico.
When the ship came over,
The birds began to sing,
Wasn't that a pretty wile
For Emperor or King!

Fun.

THE WITICISM OF A WIT OUTWITTED.

A short time ago, a commercial traveller from Newcastle being at St. John's Chapel, Weardale, and having got business done for the day, repaired to the King's Head Inn with one of his customers, a draper, to enjoy a pipe and have a little chat over a glass of grog.

Through the course of the evening, quite a lot of amusing and witty anecdotes were related; and the two gentlemen being "dona" at the game, strove to outdo the other with their witty tales. The Tynesider, to give the finishing touch, as he thought, said—

"There once lived a Quaker at Garrigill, whose name was Hugh, and he thought himself a great and good reader, to vindicate which he usually repaired to the bridge in the village with his Bible at night, and read aloud to the dalemen, who often gathered on the bridge. However, amongst the group one night, was found a Methodist preacher, who had come to hear the Quaker in his broad-brimmed hat read from the Bible. As Hugh glanced somewhat quickly over the lines in the book he came to the word *development*, which word the reader pronounced *devel-ope-ment*.

"*Devel-ope-ment*, Hugh!" said the preacher, "what does that mean?"

"Here," said Hugh, handing the book, "leik for the sell."

"The youth took the book, and looking at the word said:

"*'Why, that's development, man!'*"

"Hugh was not a little puzzled. He lifted his broad-brim to scratch his head, which had no effect; so he pocketed the book and walked off, and was never more seen on Garrigill Bridge with the Bible."

The company were about to praise the story, but were interrupted by the draper, who said to the traveller, rather keenly:

"I beg your pardon, sir, would you tell me in what part of the Bible is the word *development*?"

This question struck the Newcastle with amazement, who sat looking fixedly at nothing. At last he confessed the word was not in the Bible at all, so that the sarcasm used at the Quaker's expense rebounded against himself; and it is to be hoped that, like Hugh of old, the traveller will never more be heard to tell the tale.

AN excited father called in great haste on Dr. Abernethy and exclaimed, in an excited manner, "Doctor! Doctor! my boy has swallowed a mouse!" "Then go home," quietly replied the doctor, "and tell him to swallow a cat!"

WHAT funny customs we establish. If you ask your friend for a postage stamp he accepts a penny as a matter of course; but if you ask him for a cigar he would regard it as an insult if you tendered threepence or sixpence in payment.

A GENTLEMAN, speaking of the married state before his daughter, whom he wished to dissuade from matrimony, said: "She who marries, does well; but she who does not marry, does better." "Well, then," said the young lady, "I will do well; let those who choose do better."

SCENES IN A ROMAN STUDIO.—Mr. Powers also related with great gusto the story of a bluff Englishman, who came storming into his studio one day with the frank announcement: "I don't know anything about statuary. I've come to your studio because it's one of the sights of Florence. Busts all look just alike to me." After wandering about for

a long time among the crowded treasures of the many-roomed studio with a vacant stare, a sudden gleam of intelligence illumined his broad countenance. Mr. Powers, started, turned to discover what had so transfigured his stolidity. It was a plaster cast of the famous Florentine Boar, before which the delighted connoisseur had struck an attitude. "That's a foine hanimal, sir! I raise pigs myself, sir! A foine hanimal! pray what breed is it?" "A wild boar." "Ah, poor condition he's in, sir; 'twould take a long time to fetch him up to where my pigs are? But he's a foine hanimal, sir!"

A VENDOR of cement, describing its action, said it was peculiarly useful in mending jars. A purchaser inquired if it would mend the jar of a door? "There is no occasion for its use in that case," said the pedlar, "for that is sound enough." Another asked if it would mend family jars? "In that case there is more sound than sense," replied the pedlar, and vanished.

TWO ROADS.

"Which of these roads leads to the village of W—?" inquired a traveller, as he came to a place where the road he was travelling forked in different directions, of an urchin who sat upon a log near by, and whose appearance indicated that he was evidently a specimen.

"Any one on 'em, sir," answered the boy.

"Which is the best, my lad?" inquired the traveller.

"Ain't nary one on 'em the best."

"Which is the nearest?"

"Ain't much difference."

"Which do you think I had better take?"

"You may take any on 'em; and afore you get half-way ther' you'll wish you had tuck t'other one."

THE following excellent joke occurred not long ago at the table of a functionary not more remarkable for his sound law than his ready wit. Having a large dinner party, the coachman (as is not unusual on such occasions) assisted in waiting at table. On his way from the dining-room, however, unhappily, coachman's foot slipped, and down went, with a tremendous crash no small number of plates and dishes; on hearing which the lady of the mansion started from her chair with affright. "Never mind, my dear," said the host with imperturbable good-humour, "it is only the coachman going out with the break."

A VERY HARD CASE.—A barrister who had several causes to conduct in the Court of Session on hearing the bell ring for a cry by the mace, hurriedly left the division in which he was about to speak for another division, in which Lord Ivory was sitting, that he might get a pending case before his Lordship postponed for an hour. Meeting a brother of the long robe adjusting his wig, as he issued from the court whether he was hastening, he anxiously inquired, expecting to save time, "What case is on now?" "Oh, it's an exceedingly hard case. 'Wood' and 'Horne' are pleading before 'Ivory.'"

FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS.

A most striking case of disinterestedness came under our observation the other day. A gentleman complained to us of headache, and said it was produced "by drinking Irish whisky." We told him our private opinion was, it served him right.

"But," said he, "I did it for the benefit of others. I knew if my companion drank it all he would get drunk and abuse his family, so I drank what he offered me, leaving him just enough to make him good-natured."

We gave it up at once, and resolved to chronicle the fact as a remarkable instance of self-denial, for the benefit of a fellow creature and his family.

THIS SIDE UP.—We saw Jake nailing up a box, the other day, containing some articles which he intended sending by express. From the nature of the contents we knew it was essential that the box should not be inverted on the passage. So we ventured the suggestion to Jake to place the much-abused "This side up," &c., conspicuously upon the cover. A few days after we saw Jake. "Heard from your goods, Jake? Did they get there safely?" "Every one broke!" replied Jake, sullenly. "Lost the hull lot! Hang the Express Company!" "Did you put on 'This side up,' as we told you?" "Yes, I did; an' fur fear they shouldn't see it on the kiver, I put it on the bottom tew—confound 'em!"

SEEING A FIRE.—The arrangements for extinguishing fires in Leavenworth are not very perfect; but the citizens generally are wide awake and on hand to prevent a conflagration, of which our people have been in fear the past two years. As an instance of the zeal of some of our citizens, I will cite the following:—As a German, by the way, was passing down the principal business street about ten o'clock at night, he espied what appeared to be a fire in the second story of a building across the street. He immediately raised the alarm, and rushed across the street, and commenced kicking in the windows to

effect an entrance, all the while crying "Fire! fire!" Getting through the aperture that he had made he rushed into the room, the expectant crowd outside waiting for further orders from their leader. Hardly had a moment elapsed before he again appeared, and cried out in an excited manner—"Somebody bring me a light, quick, quick, so I can see vore de fire ish!"

CULINARY MAXIMS.

To secure light bread—put your flour into the hands of a grocer, and it will be sure to rise.
Ice-cream should be baked in a quick oven.
Domestic "broils" should be avoided.
Don't eat soup with a fork.
Potatoes should come to the table with their jackets off—being an exception to the general rule of etiquette.

A SEASONABLE HINT.—Wilkes never lost his presence of mind, but was always full of resources. When he was apprehended by the king's messengers, the warrant included Churchill, the poet, who entered the room just as Wilkes was captured. "Thompson, my dear fellow," cried Wilkes, as if overjoyed to see him, "they have seized me, and the warrant includes Churchill. You are not likely to see Churchill yourself, but if you meet any of his friends, beg them to warn him to get out of the way." Churchill took the hint, and, after a few observations about Mrs. Thompson, he left the room, and took care to be off pretty quickly, directly he was clear of the house.

Why ought an old man to be fond of sugar-plums?—Because he likes his little comforts. *Punch.*

A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

Country Parson (to hard-drinking Old Pauper): "Why, surely, Muggidge, you were relieved last week from the Communion Alms!"
Muggidge: "Communion Alms, Sir! 'S true's I stand here, never was inside the 'ouse in all my life, Sir! Never heard of it, Sir!" *Punch.*

DELICATELY, BUT FORCIBLY PUT!

Frank: "Whose dog is this, Miss Mary, that I have just picked up from under the table?"
Miss Mary: "My dog, Mr. Frank."
Frank: "Your dog! What a little beauty! Isn't there some saying about 'Loving me and loving my dog'? Yes? I thought so! The blind and passionate adoration I feel towards this delightful little quadruped is becoming positively frantic, I give you my word of honour!" *Punch.*

A CATCH.—It is rumoured that all disputes arising at Cricket during the current season are to be referred for adjudication to the Bail Court.—*Punch.*

DELICATE FLATTERY.

Sweet Thing of Forty:—Really, Crofts, I think this wreath becomes me."
Crofts:—"Lor, miss! Why it's you becomes the wreath. I think I know what the captain will say when he sees it!" *Fun.*

"HAVE YOU GOT EYRE A POUND ABOUT YER?"—We see that a large and influential public meeting in Jamaica has unanimously adopted a resolution to present Governor Eyre with a testimonial for his "energy, promptitude, and unremitting exertions" during the outbreak. It is evident that people on the spot do not consider the Governor to be as black, or the negro to be as white, as he is paluted over here. We have no doubt sympathizers in England will be allowed to join the subscription. *Fun.*

WE regret to learn the death of an excellent old officer of nearly forty years' standing. Captain Priest was four times gazetted during the Russian war, and accepted retirement as captain so late as last November, when he was serving as Queen's Harbour-Master at Holyhead. Under Order in Council, 16th February last, he received a Greenwich Hospital pension of £65, on the Commanders' List, which is now at the disposal of the Duke of Somerset.

A PHEASANT RACING WITH THE RAILWAY TRAINS.—The *Dundee Advertiser* is responsible for the following story:—A few weeks ago the attention of engineers and guards on the Great North of Scotland Railway was attracted to the conduct of a cock pheasant, which seemed determined to vie in speed with the trains. This bird, which generally made its appearance from a wood near the Rothiemay station, came with all possible speed to the line on hearing a train. After waiting patiently till the engine was fairly alongside, the pheasant then started off and raced with great apparent determination till he was distanced by the locomotive, which generally occurred within 400 yards. As day after day passed in this way, the bird began to be looked for at every train, and seldom failed to enter the lists. He also seemed to get better acquainted with the trains, and commenced to avoid those with passengers, as being (it is supposed) too fast for his powers of speed, choosing

rather to make his contest with the heavier goods. And, though it may appear incredible, this pheasant has evidently got some knowledge of the dangers attending such freaks as his. A few days ago he was observed feeding in a field with two hens, and as soon as the train came in sight he made off towards the wood till he had started his companions, and got them, so to speak, to a place of safety. Then he suddenly reversed his course, and made straight for the line, where he got his usual run with the train. As may be supposed, the bird has made himself a favourite with the officials, who say that his rucful and disappointed looks when he is fairly beaten and left behind are of the most comical and amusing character.

LOVINGLY DROPPED.

BUST enough have I been to-day,
Learning of fairies their tricks and way;
Wresting a charm from a magic ring;
Claiming a promise from gnome and king
Under the warm brown earth who dwells;
Beautiful captives are there in cells,
Fettered and hidden though they may be
Spell is their weaving to show to me.

Those beautiful ones set free!

The zephyr, thus whispered he,

And robin he sang it merrily,

The bee was humming it cheerily,

That the beautiful ones were free.

Lovingly dropped I each small brown seed,
Sunshine, and dew, give them glad some speed!
Brood o'er them, motherly, rich warm earth,
Jealously guard them from blight and dearth.
This shall unfold with an eye more blue
Than summer sky in its brightest hue,
Upward shall spring from that tiny slip,
Rose bloom as fragrant as beauty's lip.

When beautiful ones are free,

The zephyrs shall woo them tenderly,

The butterflies dance with them cheerily,

The bees shall sup with them daintily

When the beautiful ones are free!

Wonderful alchemist, Nature, say,
Are other gardens to plant to-day?

Every one may we drop a seed,

Growing fair blossom, or noisome weed?

Filling with fragrance and bloom the heart,

Or leaving bramble and thorn to start?

Teach me a lesson from garden play,

Plant I my blossoms on life's broad way!

That the beautiful thoughts rise up from me,

Till the deeds shall blossom spontaneously,

And the seed shall ripen all goldenly

For the reaper's hand in eternity.

T. C.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO KEEP ICE.—Make a double pocket of any kind of strong woollen cloth, no matter how faded and coarse it is. Have a space of two inches or so between the inner and outer pockets, and pack this space as full as possible with feathers. You have no need to use goose feathers; hen's feathers are just as good. With a pocket thus constructed, and kept closely tied at the mouth, a few pounds of ice may be kept a week.

A GOOD WHITEWASH.

At this season people generally set their houses in order and prepare for the hot weather. As whitewash is in great request it may not be inappropriate to publish the following recipe. It is intended for buildings or out-door use, but is also adapted for walls. Let us say here that we have never found anything equal to glue for fixing the lime on the walls. It should be liberally applied, say half a pound to a washtub full of whitewash, and if well stirred in will never fail. There is no greater nuisance than whitewash that rubs off on everything that touches it.

Take a clean water-tight barrel, or other suitable cask, and put into it a half bushel of lime. Slack it by pouring boiling water over it, and in sufficient quantity to cover five inches deep stirring it briskly till thoroughly slacked. When slacking has been effected, dissolve in water, and add two pounds of sulphate of zinc and one of common salt. These will cause the wash to harden and prevent it cracking, which gives an unseemly appearance to the work. If desirable, a beautiful cream colour may be communicated to the above wash, by adding three pounds of yellow ochre. This wash may be applied with a common whitewash brush, and will be found much superior, both in appearance and durability, to common whitewash.

TOMATO CULTURE.—The great secret is in pinching off the head continually just at the bunch of fruit, for if allowed to go to two or more eyes, then they would lose their fruiting in luxuriance of growth. This

pinching off the head is continued to the height that the plant is grown to (about three feet high or so), and this height is quite enough for the plants to ripen off their luxuriant and splendid loaded crop. On the above management they may be grown against ridges in this way, or even staked up if the situation is warm. My principal object is to encourage the cottager to grow this plant for his own consumption. The Americans eat the love-apple raw, just the same as our labourers eat onions, but it is to make sauce that I recommend its growth. Now, before I found out the simple way of making the plant bear a heavy crop, I dare not have recommended the cottager to waste his time about it, for this plant, if allowed to grow anyhow, is the most barren of any plant I know of; and when fruit is produced half of it never ripens at all.—*Mr. Cuthill, in "Profitable Gardening."*

RHUBARB JAM.—Take 8 lb. rhubarb, 8 lb. crushed sugar, 3 oz. essence of ginger. Skin and cut the rhubarb in pieces of from two to three inches in length; put a layer of it and a layer of sugar alternately in a glazed jar till all is finished; let it stand from 36 to 48 hours, then pick the rhubarb out, and boil the syrup slowly for 40 minutes after it first comes to the boil; then add the rhubarb, boil till it is soft to the touch, but do not allow it to break; then add the ginger, boil half-a-minute, then bottle in large jars.

GEMS.

UNKIND language is sure to produce the fruits of unkindness that is suffering in the bosom of others.

It is strange that man, born to suffering, and often writhing beneath it, should wantonly inflict it on his fellows.

In their intercourse with the world, people should not take words as so much genuine coin of standard metal, but merely as counters that people play with.

THE same plan of conduct through life which will prevent us from having any enemies, will shut the door against warm friendships and the more delicate offices of kindness.

THE talker must be, of necessity, the smallest of human souls. His soul must dwindle, dwindle, dwindle, for he utters great feelings in words instead of acts, and so satiates his need of utterance, the need of all.

CHOICE OF WORDS.—When you doubt between two words, choose the plainest, the commonest, the most idiomatic. Eschew fine words as you would rouge; love simple ones as you would native roses on your cheeks. Let us use the plainest and shortest words that will grammatically and gracefully express our meaning.

PERSEVERANCE.—If you wish to do good, do good; if you wish to assist people, assist people. The only way to learn to do a thing is to do it; and that implies, before you learn to do right you will do wrong. You will make blunders, you will have failures; but persevere; and, in the end, you will learn your lesson, and many other lessons by the way.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SIXTEEN Egyptian dancers are entertaining the Parisians.

SNOW IN JUNE.—On Saturday, June 13, the Argyleshire mountains were clad in snow.

CITIZENS of Vera Cruz have given Maximilian a sceptre of gold ornamented with diamonds.

A FOX-HUNT has been established at Vienna, and fifty foxhounds have been forwarded thither *via* Hull and Rotterdam.

A LARGE flock of pigeons recently entered the Free Church at Lochle, and created such a disturbance that the congregation had to be dismissed.

LUXURIES are very dear in America just now. A bottle of champagne costs four guineas. The farewell dinner given to Sir Morton Peto in New York is said to have cost £4000.

In 1865 the total number of letters, papers, and packets was 818,990,000. Above 12,000 were posted without any address, and of these 298 contained cash, notes, &c., to the amount of £3,700.

In 1865 there were 43,569,955 free newspapers delivered in the year in the United Kingdom, and 53,682,811 book packets, including chargeable newspapers.

ADULTERATED MILK.—A case was decided in the Sheffield County Court lately, the evidence in which disclosed to what an enormous extent milk is adulterated with water. Mr. Goodlad, of the Park, was sued for his milk bill, and he declined to pay it because pure milk had not been served him. His defence availed, and a verdict with costs was recorded in his favour.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

K. G.—A man born of English parents in France is an Englishman.

A. FRANK.—Your question is so complicated, that we cannot advise you. Consult a solicitor at once.

ANT. LEVANT.—Handwriting very good indeed for "Nineteen."

WALTER, twenty-six, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, the son of a tradesman, and engaged in the City.

G. N., of H.M. Gunnery Academy, Portsmouth, twenty-three, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, fair complexion.

A. MECHANIC.—Certainly you would be liable to a prosecution for bigamy were you to marry while your wife is confined in a lunatic asylum. The very wish is inclination.

GUILLAUME.—To curl a boy's hair with cold water every morning, and dry it well. If this will not do, nothing will.

A. CONSTANT READER.—Apply to the secretary of the charity you name, and doubtless that gentleman will supply you with all the necessary information.

LIZZY AND CARRY.—Both tall and good looking. "Lizzy," nineteen, has dark hair and eyes; "Carry," twenty, has grey eyes, light brown hair. Dark gentlemen preferred.

MISS MAUGIL, twenty-one, an orphan, without money, of medium height, black hair, thoroughly domesticated; would make a good wife to a steady industrious man.

A. BELLS IN BLUE, nineteen, tall, fair, and ladylike, wishes to open a correspondence with a tall, dark gentleman who is fond of home.

MAT ASHMORE, twenty-one, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, blue eyes, brown hair. Respondent must be rather tall, dark, good tempered, and fond of home.

FLORENCE H., twenty, 5 ft. 2 in. in height, brown hair and eyes, no fortune but a loving heart to offer; the young gentleman must be of respectable means.

HARRY PERCIVAL, nearly nineteen, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, fair, chestnut curls, and an income at present of 75s. a year, with every prospect of an increase.

B. F. K., nineteen, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, black curly hair and eyebrows.—Time alone will remove the marks from your arms.

FRANK, twenty-two, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, dark; and when at sea can earn 300l. per annum. Just enough to live on with economy.

C. J. WILLIAMS.—Not knowing your capabilities, how can we possibly advise you what kind of clerkship you are fit for? Your handwriting is good. Advertise, or consult the advertising columns of the daily papers, and judge for yourself.

FLORENCE.—Why not rest satisfied with the eyelashes nature has given you? Do not attempt to pencil them. Olive oil will do no harm to your eyebrows, and may, perhaps, slightly encourage their growth.

O. O. O.—It is possible, though improbable, that by advertising you might find a purchaser for your used postage stamps. A few years since there was a mania among a certain class of persons to use them for decorating ceilings.

KATE AND MAUD, two sisters. Kate is nineteen, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, good temper, hazel eyes, and very pretty, and a good singer. "Maud" is eighteen, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, and very fair.

W. Y., seventeen, petite, fair, wavy hair, pink cheeks, dark blue eyes, small hands and feet; can sing, dance, and is a tolerable musician. No money nor expectations. Respondent must be tall, dark, intelligent, good natured, and loving.

LAURA MORRIS, nineteen, brown hair, dark complexion. Respondent must be of medium height, dark, and good tempered. "L. M." has no fortune, but is thoroughly domesticated.

WHITE CARRIAGE would like to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman, about twenty or twenty-one; she is eighteen, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark complexion, brown hair and eyes, and considered very good looking.

WALTER and FRED NEVILLE (brothers).—"Walter" is twenty-one, dark, and medium height; "Fred," nineteen, tall, and dark. Both in receipt of good salaries. The ladies must be respectably connected, and if fair, preferred.

J. W., an officer in the merchant navy, thirty, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, passable in appearance, good tempered, fond of music, and attached to home; heir to considerable landed property.

A. CONSTANT READER.—The wife of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, The Right Hon. C. S. Fortescue, is a daughter of the late John Graham, the great singer. Her ladyship first married the Earl of Walsgrave; secondly, G. G. Harcourt, Esq. M.P.; and, lastly, in 1853, Mr. Fortescue.

FORGET-ME-NOT AND VIOLET.—"Forget-Me-Not," tall, fair, light hair, grey eyes, and pretty. "Violet" has light hair, grey eyes, and a good complexion. Both are good tem-

pered and fond of home. Respondents must be dark, and possessed of some income; good temper indispensable. (1.) Handwriting very bad, but the spelling is even worse. (2.) Use salt-water and a soft brush twice or thrice a day.

NANCY.—Recipe is pronounced "Nas-se-pe."

JESSIE RAY, nineteen, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, brown eyes and hair, fair. Respondent must be dark, good tempered, and fond of society. "Jessie" would prefer him taller than herself, of respectable family, and a tradesman.

LIVERPOOL, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, pleasant looking (not handsome), good-tempered, rather dark, and with a prospect of being in receipt of 75l. or 80l. per annum in a few months. Respondent must be about sixteen or seventeen years of age.

J. W. P.—At eighteen you are too old to commence a seafaring life. The situation will be very difficult to obtain without you can make interest with the owners or captains of the vessels you name. Possibilities do not go "a-begging."

LAURA and LIZZIE.—"Laura," eighteen, tall, dark hair and eyes, pretty, and will have 100l. a year. "Lizzie," nineteen, medium height, brown hair and eyes, and will have 300l. a year; both are well educated, and fond of music and singing.

FLORENCE.—Your handwriting and spelling are unpardonably bad, so much so that we doubt if you could succeed in any intellectual profession. Your notion of being a good tragic actress is foolish in the extreme. Take our advice, cast all such foolish thoughts from your mind, or assuredly they will bring you to grief.

ANXIOUS MOTHER.—A child born after marriage, at any time, is considered legitimate. A marriage before a registrar is perfectly valid. A registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, is to be found upon inquiry in every parish. Consult the parochial directory, which may be had from the beads.

F. J. (Manchester).—Address a letter as lucidly written as that with which you have favoured us, to the Postmaster-General, General Post-office, London, and without doubt the discrepancy you name will be fully explained in a letter from one of the officials.

LITTLE FLOT.

Again the world wheels softly on
Laid the golden light of spring
With life the southern hill sides thro' thro' thro'
With life the woods are whispering
Back to their last year's nests the birds
Back the young leaves to shrub and tree;
But not from earth, or sea, or air,
Comes back my sweet lost lamb to me.

The merest seed that fell last year—
The merest blade upon the plain—
Swells with the royal gift of life,
But to my flower I call in vain.

Of bird, and bud, and warm south wind,
She—brighter, sweeter than them all—
In some existence, rich and strange,
Heeds neither Spring's nor Love's recall.

A TIMID ONE, 5 ft. 11 in. in height, must be also a very foolish one, to be ashamed to be seen walking with a young lady he knows would make him a very good wife, simply because she is only 5 ft. 2 in. in stature. Surely it is not only about the giant Chang and his wife that there is such a disparity of fates.

ANT. CORTIS.—Scurvy requires medical treatment, do not tamper with yourself, but consult the nearest surgeon. The specimens of hair enclosed, are respectively light brown, brown, and dark brown. The word *cigarette* is pronounced "et-ek-et." Handwriting clear and legible, but your orthography is very bad.

FRANK, twenty-five, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, dark, whiskers, and moustache, the son of a gentleman, and, by profession a shorthand writer. Salary not large at present, but sufficient for moderate comfort. The lady must be of good appearance, domesticated, fairly educated, amiable, and pleasing; if with money so much the better.

FRANCIS R. GREENVILLE, nineteen, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, gentlemanly, of average good looks, in a lucrative situation in a mercantile firm, and of highly respectable family. The lady must be between seventeen and nineteen; tall, a good figure, pretty, of ladylike deportment, refined habits, and amiable in disposition.

JOHN and FRANK, two friends. "John" twenty-five, tall, fair, with blue eyes, affectionate and good looking; the lady must be tall, good looking, respectable, moderately educated, and possessed of a small income. "Frank," twenty, tall, fair, good tempered, and good looking; the respondent must be of medium height, either dark or fair, highly respectable, and have a small fortune.

JENNIE H.—The daughter of a naval officer, nineteen, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, black curly hair, black eyes, and purely Grecian features; considered very beautiful, and has 300l. a year, and will have 1,000l. on her marriage. Respondent must be tall, dark, handsome, and between twenty and twenty-eight years of age. Money no object.

ANT and JESSIE.—"Ant" is eighteen, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, dark brown hair, and blue eyes. "Jessie" also eighteen, fair, 5 feet 4 in. in height, having light hair, and blue eyes; both are good-looking, and fine figures. The respondents must be tall and dark, also professional gentlemen, who could place them in a position on the stage, as they both have great taste for it.

WINIFRED and ROSEBELLA (two cousins).—"Winifred" is nineteen, tall, fair, hazel eyes, and dark brown hair, thoroughly domesticated; has received a sound good English education, and is passionately fond of music. "Rosebella" is of the medium height, black hair and eyes, clear complexion, a good figure, has received a good education, and is an excellent pianist. Dark gentlemen preferred.

LAURA MAY.—A manuscript should be carefully prepared, clearly and legibly written (not in shorthand), all due attention being paid to grammar and spelling, before being placed in the hands of the printer; otherwise, the cost of production will be greatly increased, and the author's chance of success considerably diminished. We cannot advise you as to the best publisher, or what remuneration you would be likely to receive. Much would depend upon

the subject, still more upon the merits of the composition. Your only course is to submit it to the judgment either of a publisher of novels, or the editor of a periodical, when, if it be really good and original, you will not be long without finding a market. You should, however, retain a copy by you.

X. Y. Z., forty-six, 5 ft. in height, a widower, with income, very fond of home, domesticated, and holding a situation which produces 100l. per annum; has, also, a little property—say about 800l. Respondent must be about forty, good tempered, fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated; with a little property.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

F. is responded to by—"Lady May," who knows he will suit her, as he is just her *beau idéal* of a young gentleman—"M. A. L.," fifteen, dark hair and eyes; and—"Lizzie," sixteen, fair, brown hair and eyes; of middle size, and rather pretty.

HENRI and ALBERT by—"Lizzie" and "Polly." "Lizzie" twenty-one, tall, very graceful, blue eyes, golden hair, very good looking, of a lively and cheerful disposition, and thinks she possesses all the requirements to make "Henri" happy. "Polly," eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, light hair, blue eyes, pretty, and of a loving disposition; both respectably connected, well educated, domesticated, very fond of music, and wish for nothing but two loving hearts in return for theirs. "Albert" is replied to also by—"Annie O.," nineteen, medium height, blue eyes, brown curly hair, good looking and thoroughly domesticated.

ARTHUR by—"Polly," nineteen, 5 ft. 2 in. in height, a servant, well brought up, brown eyes, and a pretty face—"Wait-a-while," who has no property, but thinks she would make "Arthur" a very loving, domesticated, little wife—"Humble Chip," well educated, of middle height, fair, blue eyes, anubus hair, and the daughter of a highly respectable tradesman; and—"Polly," eighteen, dark, tall, good looking, and domesticated.

VINCENT BROWNLOW by—"Annie C.," twenty, fair, middle height, curly hair, good tempered, and good looking—"M. B.," twenty-three, a domestic servant, jet black curly hair, medium height, not very stout, genteel looking, and quite sure she would make a good husband a happy home and a loving little wife—"Leamington," twenty-three, blue eyes, brown hair, fair, tall, not bad looking, thoroughly domesticated, and would make a loving and affectionate wife—"C. Gough," a servant without money, twenty-five, fair, blue eyes, good looking, very loving, and domesticated—"J. R.," twenty-three, a servant, dark, blue eyes, short stature, good tempered, and thoroughly domesticated—"Louisa and Phoebe," two friends. "Louisa," dark hair and eyes, rather dark complexion. "Phoebe," dark hair, and hazel eyes; and—"Annie O.," twenty, fair, medium height, and good tempered.

J. W. by—"A. L.," forty, accustomed to business, well educated, respectably connected, dark, middle height, of a cheerful and affectionate disposition. Has a little money; and—"L. A.," thirty, neither dark nor fair, below the medium height, quiet, and genteel in appearance; accustomed to domestic affairs, and not unacquainted with business, having to attend to one at the present time.

DOROTHY—"China Rose," seventeen, 5 ft. in height, brown hair, blue eyes, and thoroughly domesticated.

SCOTTS by—"J. S.," a widow, thirty-four, good looking, with one son, who thinks she will suit the once well-to-do farmer "Scot."s.

J. F. by—"Beale D.," nineteen, dark, good-tempered, and loving; would make a good wife, and dearly loves a sailor. CANTONER by—"Rose Colman," twenty-five, short, dark curly hair, and dark grey eyes, and very amiable.

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LOUISA by—"W. D. P. D.," nineteen, 5 ft. 2 in. in height, brown hair, blue eyes, and aptitude to a mechanic; and—"Slidder," young, in business, with good prospects, and, like "Louisa," very fond of music.

GRACE D. by—"Sholto," twenty-five, not dark, middle height, good looking, full whiskered, in a good social position, possessed of an income of 300l., well educated, would make a model husband, and can offer a comfortable home—"Horace," the son of a retired officer, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, brown hair, dark eyes, curly hair, and genteel figure, of German extraction; and—"David," twenty, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, dark, small moustache, black hair, thoroughly educated, a fair musician, and with an income of 100l. a year.

FLORENCE by—"A. M. D.," who is a midshipman in the navy, eighteen, dark, with brown and curling hair.

E. CLARE by—"Willie Gray," twenty-four, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, dark, a good pianist, fond of books, and with an income of 100l. a year.

GRACE D. and CONSTANCE H. by—"H. N.," twenty-one, dark, medium height, tolerably good tempered, and with an income of about 100l.; not good looking, but not ugly—"Edwin Stanhope M.," twenty-five, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, the son of a surgeon, dark, in the veterinary profession; and—"R. B. S.," twenty-four, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark, and respectably connected.

LOUISE H. by—"Germania," a native of Germany, who speaks English fluently, twenty-four, fair, good-tempered, fond of home, in business for herself; and—"F. W. Q.," would like to correspond with her.

AN ENGLISH GIRL by—"A. G. C.," 5 ft. 4 in. in height, dark, and in a responsible situation in a large bank; and—"John A. N.," twenty, good looking, and with good prospects.

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